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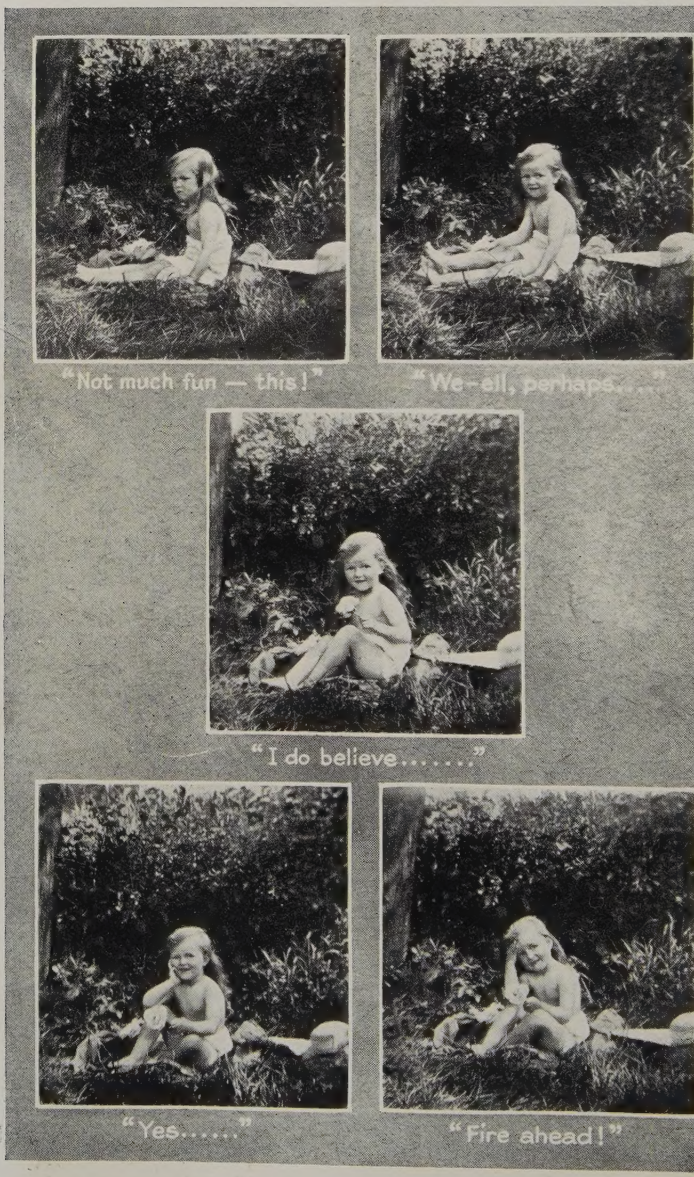
SOME CONTRIBUTIONS TO CHILD PSYCHOLOGY



THE STORY

"Once upon a time . . ."

SOME CONTRIBUTIONS TO CHILD PSYCHOLOGY

BY

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"FIVE YEARS OLD, OR THEREABOUTS," ETC.

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THE DAWN OF MIND

AN INTRODUCTION TO CHILD PSYCHOLOGY

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SOME CHAPTERS ON THE PSYCHOLOGY AND TRAINING OF LITTLE CHILDREN

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PREFACE

SOME thirty years ago Professor James entered a protest against the extravagant claims then being made on behalf of a " new psychology " to provide the basis for a new and exact practice of education. The new psychology of that day, sometimes called experimental psychology because of its use of laboratories and instruments and refined methods of measurement, is now old. It has made and is still making its contributions to the science, but it has not revolutionized education, though no doubt the knowledge gained by its laborious analytical methods has to some extent filtered out through the minds of educational theorists, and so to a slight but possibly increasing degree modified educational practice.

To-day we hear once more of a new psychology. This time it emanates from the consulting-room of the physician, not from the laboratory of the scientist. Its work is the outcome of a practical need, the need to give help to those world wayfarers whose burden has proved too heavy, who have failed to adjust themselves to life, who can no longer " carry on." To minister to a mind diseased has long been recognized as the hardest part of a physician's task, and it is this that the new psychology with striking success has been endeavouring to do.

In the course of this work great stress has come to be laid on infantile experience. The failures of adjustment of maturity have their roots in childish experiences which have been forgotten. Modern medical research confirms

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in the most emphatic way the foundational importance of the very early years.

The psychology of babyhood is still very obscure. In this book I have attempted to add a little to what I have already said on the subject in a previous book, *The Dawn of Mind*. In this attempt I owe much to the writings of Freud, Jung, Adler, Lay, Ernest Jones, Ferenczi, and others, but I have accepted no opinion which does not seem to accord with my own observation and experience.

There is probably no sphere of psychology, unless we except that just referred to, where the new ideas will have a more far-reaching influence than in that of the imagination. The Kindergarten method of education, as developed in America and in this country, undoubtedly did much to encourage certain fanciful modes of thinking characteristic of childhood. Ribot in his important work on *Creative Imagination* certainly encouraged the tendency to overestimate the value of the child's imaginative constructions. He declares that the child who weaves romances about the persons and things he meets with is the gifted child, that such conduct foretells a superior mental development. All who know anything of little children know that they often mingle fact and fancy without any intention to deceive; their behaviour in this respect is readily understood by those who know something of the psychology of memory. Sometimes this habit accompanies a superior mental endowment, but very often it does not. One could certainly not nowadays accept this declaration of Ribot's.

In seeking by his method of free association to reach the nucleus of the disabilities from which his neurotic patients were suffering, Freud came with unfailing regularity on childhood experiences which he could not but regard as the chief causal factor in the illness. These experiences, brought up in the memory of the patient by a special technique, were at first taken to be real; later Freud realized that in many cases they were not real, but were

phantasy formations or imaginative constructions. They have " psychic reality," and that has been sufficient.

In view of the facts thus briefly sketched it seems to me important that psychologists and educationists should reconsider the whole question of the nature of imagination in childhood and the best means of training it. Individual differences are no doubt very great, and we must not be in too great haste to formulate any general dogma, but in my opinion there is little doubt that in some of our schools the imaginative tendencies of children are being overstimulated and wrongly directed.

In this book I have therefore devoted considerable space to a discussion of this question.

There is in psychology at the present time a third congested district where much activity is going on, and where results are being obtained which are startling enough, though no one, so far as I know, has maintained that here we have a new psychology. I refer to the region of intelligence testing. Here our attention is concentrated less on the emotions, and more on the development of memory and the reasoning power. The establishment of mental scales, of standardized tests for observation, memory, motor control, vocabulary, etc., is bound to shed light on the development of these powers, and to be full of suggestion with regard to educational practice. In *The Dawn of Mind* and in *Five Years Old or Thereabouts* I have dealt with the beginnings of memory and reasoning and with other topics concerning the more intellectual aspect of the child mind. Partly on that account and partly because I think the time is not yet ripe for coordinating the work done by mental testers and estimating its value as a contribution to child psychology, I have not included these themes in the scope of this book.

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CHILD PSYCHOLOGY

CHAPTER I

CRADLE EDUCATION

EDUCATION begins in the cradle. This is a statement that is widely accepted in theory and widely disregarded in practice. One reason for this is that the untrained mother, on whom the task of early education falls, has only a very general idea of the nature and amount of development which is proper to the early years of life. Moreover she is apt to associate the word " education " with " school " and " teacher," to think that education begins when the child enters school ; she does not realize that her own work in the early years is pre-eminently educative, and may indeed make all the difference to the child's future.

Our first duty to the new-born babe is to minimize the shock of birth, and to help him in his endeavour after independent life. Till this moment his blood-stream has been one with his mother's, his nourishment one with her nourishment. Now from the warm dark silence of the narrow womb he issues, bent upon his great adventure.

Baby makes prompt use of his newly won freedom. A vigorous infant will kick and move his arms almost continuously for fifteen to thirty minutes after delivery : when at rest he tends to assume the habitual pre-natal position. Another movement which starts with birth is breathing, which is inaugurated by a cry or sometimes a sneeze.

In spite of these very intelligent adaptations to the change of environment the undeveloped state of baby's brain indicates that his consciousness is of a very simple order. For its further development his brain requires the stimuli which press in upon it along the nerves of sense from eyes and ears and skin.

As I have already indicated, our first duty as educators is to make the birth transition as easy as possible. Here nature helps us. For some hours, or more often for some days, she seals the baby's ears; for about twenty-two hours out of the twenty-four, she causes sleep to close his eyelids. Hence, within limits, there is no need for us to make special efforts to secure quiet or darkness, but warmth we must provide.

In all early education the great force that we have available to help us is the force of habit. The child's nature is such that "again" seems to be his cry from the very beginning; the very doing of a thing brings about an inclination to do it again. A succession of activities is easily linked into a sequence, so that the performance of the first causes all the others to follow.

A regular life promotes nervous stability, and one of the first duties we owe the child is to make it possible for him to lead a regular life. The clock, and not his cries, should regulate his meals. He should be bathed and dressed at the same time every day, and his functions should be regularly attended to.

According to *The Mothercraft Manual*, training for cleanliness may begin at the end of the first week.[1] "Hold a small (warmed) cuspidor firmly in the lap. Hold the baby above this, the legs extended in the hands, back resting against the mother's chest. Do this at regular time for stool, early morning or late afternoon. The use of a suppository for a few days will assist; use a little roll of soft clean paper dipped in liquid vaseline. Note on daily

[1] *The Mothercraft Manual*, by Mary L. Read (Harrap).

record the interval between feeding or drinking, and urinating (twenty to thirty minutes). Hold the baby for urinating at these regular times when awake and before beginning the bath. In a few months he will learn to control the bladder as well as the bowels for these times, when awake."

The way in which this early training is accomplished is important for future psychic life. Perfect control, even in sleep, can be established by the eighteenth month, possibly sooner. Many mothers delay matters by over-anxiety. They produce inhibitions in the child. If baby is disposed to struggle away, we should not enter on a contest with him : a little soothing playfulness or suggestive talk will relieve the tension. A good mother readily learns from her baby in what way and how far she must humour him.

Intellectual Education. For the first three months, save for the establishment of regularity and cleanliness, we need not think much about baby's education ; yet it is important that we should realize that during this period he is doing hard intellectual work. He is engaged in making an intelligible world out of his confused and contradictory sense experience. One or two examples may help us to sympathize with his difficulties. The shape and the size of objects differ to our eye according to our position with respect to them ; an egg may appear round instead of oval ; a table top may look like a diamond instead of a square ; a face may take up the whole of our field of vision, or it may be a mere spot. Baby has to learn to interpret these constant shiftings of size and shape as mere indications of qualities of position and distance of certain permanently existing objects. At this stage an eager child may suffer from actual mental over-pressure ; and crying fits may arise from pure intellectual fatigue.[1]

[1] For fuller treatment of this subject see *The Dawn of Mind*, Chapter II.

The world from which the child is seeking to emerge is in many respects like the world of the fairy tale. It is peopled by giants who wear shoes of swiftness, who can don caps of invisibility, who sit at sumptuous meals, own the purse of Fortunatus, and are possessed of unlimited power. Out of this unintelligible world the child struggles to emerge. Even in his cradle he sets himself to the task of transmuting the chaos of his experience into a coherent universe, which satisfies the demands of his reason for law and order. His is the patience of the scientist, the clear-sightedness of the genius. It is our business to help him, to clear the path before his feet. But we do not recognize our duty. Too often we take pleasure in hindering and deceiving him, and when we succeed we call the modes of thinking which our treatment causes him to develop characteristic of his being.

A regular life not only conduces to nervous stability, but it promotes intellectual development: it helps the child to realize the great law of cause and effect. A properly trained child demands law and resigns himself to it willingly. If he is allowed to discover law in his material environment then he is ready to expect it in his social environment. In my study is a low glass bookcase which Patricia, a wordless toddler, is not allowed to hammer; there is also a portfolio of papers which she is not allowed to pull from its place, though both of these activities are highly pleasing to her. One day she touched the forbidden portfolio. I said, "If Baby does that, she goes out." She answered back in an angry tone, "A-A-A-A-A." I replied gently, "Well, you know, *I* can't help it; if Baby does that, she goes out." She looked at me for a second; her expression cleared, and with a friendly, "Tata," she walked outside the door. This acceptance of law is a phenomenon well known to every wise mother.

A baby will spend a long time making those scientific inductions which are essential for the guidance of our

conduct in this particular universe wherein we find ourselves. As early as the fourth month Patricia studied intently an envelope which I moved towards and away from her eyes ; no doubt she was forming her own ideas as to what was the meaning of the remarkable alteration of size. In her sixth month she became quite excited when I showed her some pictures in *Punch*. Her little hands kept fluttering about them almost as if she was saying, " How is it I do not have proper touch experience ? " In her eighth month she watched the spinning of a top for about twenty minutes with such eager attention that she let the saliva drop from her mouth.

I provided Patricia with balls and cubes as representative of simple solids, and it was interesting to see the careful attention with which she compared them. One evening I built the cubes into a little tower and let her stretch out her hand to knock it down. Again and again we went through the process with the utmost seriousness, until all of a sudden she greeted the fall with a regular ha ha laugh. As I continued the occupation her triumphant laughter became so loud that her mother came from the next room to see what all the noise was about. Baby recognized that she had gained power ; she could foretell what was going to happen.

When outside in her pram Patricia might sometimes be seen deliberately dropping toy after toy over the side. Her little face was a study as she leaned over to watch them ; she had no words wherein to express the conclusions she drew, but no one who saw her could doubt the profundity of her thought.

I remember being once greatly impressed when Margaret was threading beads at my knee by the careful way in which she conducted each bead down the string by finger and thumb. Evidently she had not yet realized that it was bound to slide down the string and so join its fellows.

Patricia, at eight months, on the disappearance of two

tiny dolls which were sitting on the edge of her bath, looked first to one door, then to another. She thus likened the dolls to people, and indicated her discovery that when mysterious disappearances took place doors were somehow involved.

Even at fifteen months she did not apply the falling induction universally. One day I caused her little celluloid cow to stand on the horizontal bar of a table. She took hold of it and applied it to the table leg. Her mother told me she often tried to persuade her toys to stand on vertical surfaces. In her twenty-second month she discovered she could balance picture post cards on a narrow ledge ; for a day or two after this discovery she persistently held the pictures against me in the endeavour to make them stand, so that she could step back and admire her handiwork.

I sometimes wonder if the intense interest that little children often show in flies is connected with this early experimentation. The scientific caution exhibited by the baby in this matter is in strange contrast with the ready generalizations of later years.

During the first few years of life touch is the primary sense. Only very gradually does the primacy pass to the eye. A most valuable instrument for eye training is found in Dr. Montessori's block of cylinders. This in its simplest form consists of a long block of wood in which are ten cylindrical holes, which diminish gradually in thickness. Into these holes fit ten cylinders, each of which has a little knob at the top. This toy I presented to Patricia when she was about six months old. She knew at once what to do with it, but her little fingers were not strong enough to pull out the cylinders ; she was, however, somewhat interested in the holes. By the time she was nine months old she could pull them out herself. During the intervening period, when she saw I was about to give the block to her, she would kick her legs with joy as for a bottle.

She would spend about twenty minutes at a time on it, and at ten months showed signs of comparing the cylinders, thus realizing "thick" and "thin." She would also experiment in holding them, trying, for example, to take two in one hand. Then the toy lost interest for a little, and I put it away.

When the child was about sixteen months she could put the cylinders into the holes ; but even at eighteen months she occasionally tried a hole much too small. Her eye was thus not fully trained. But at the Free Kindergartens I have often seen little ones of three or even four showing in their work with the cylinders much less comprehension than Baby has acquired.

A large cylindrical waste-paper basket was a favourite toy with both Margaret and Patricia, and they both learned much from it. They gained skill by manipulating it, and its contents were an endless source of interest. A top proved another attractive toy. To be sure it requires a grown-up person to do the winding, but a baby soon shows his understanding by insisting that he be allowed to put top and winder together.

The long spells of attention which a mere infant can give are very remarkable. An eight months' baby may be absorbed for twenty to thirty or more minutes. This concentration should be respected and encouraged. In homes where this is not the case, the power is often lost. The consequence is that one sees little ones of three or even five tossed to and fro at the mercy of their sensations. Johnnie begins to sweep the floor ; he catches sight of some bricks, and dustpan in hand goes off to build a tower ; then the children round the bird cage distract him ; he joins them—a leaf lifted by the wind, a straw engulfed by the whirlpool.

Certain cases of defective mental development seem to depend mainly on the fact that there is inability to concentrate. For example Ian is eight, but he has made little

or no progress in school work, and for some weeks now I have been giving him occasional lessons in counting. His answers are always ready, but often absurd. His look is "flyaway." I show him some pictures and ask him to name them. His answers show how imperfectly he looks at them. A row of plates he calls "clocks," two pairs of children's slippers lying in disorder near one another he misinterprets as "a dog." A cock, a goose, and a squirrel are each in turn called "a hen." Soup steaming in a bowl is interpreted as "Jack in the box." In a picture of a girl carrying a pail in one hand and a three-legged stool in the other he named the pail correctly but called the stool a spade. This is an example of the automatism which is so common in feeble and childish mentality.[1]

Some methods of education tend to encourage this "flyaway" attitude. Some little children are very quick to see superficial resemblances. A rough drawing made by themselves is quickly named a kite or a ship. By some teachers such reactions are regarded as evidence of the child's wonderful imagination, and their passing away is mourned as a victory of prose over poetry, of the dull and drab over the beautiful and romantic.

One of the fundamental purposes of this book is to protest against this attitude as depending on an unsound and superficial psychology and as leading to educational practice which is harmful to the child.

Language. If a baby is talked to from the first it is surprising how soon he gives evidence of understanding. Patricia at eight months was crying in my arms. I said, "I will get out the top for you," whereupon the crying ceased.

When a baby makes little attempt to speak we often greatly underrate his intelligence, and we are often unwise enough to indicate our meaning to him by action instead of by words.

[1] Cf. *Dawn of Mind*, p. 122.

Even when one is not sure that the child is able to understand one should explain what is going to happen. In her twentieth month Margaret had developed a habit of crying insistently for her mother at bedtime. One morning her mother told her she "was going ta-ta that evening to Somerville." When evening came she said, "Now mother is going ta-ta." Baby pointed out of the window to Somerville, which was just opposite, thus indicating her comprehension. That evening she went peaceably to bed and made no outcry for her mother.

In her eighth month or sooner Patricia would usually obey her mother's verbal commands. About this time she often sat in a chair wrapped in a rug or quilt. She developed a habit of biting such a covering. One day I imprudently pulled it out of her mouth two or three times. We went to another room, and she was again seated on a down quilt. She put it in her mouth. "Down, Baby," said her mother. But instead of obeying as she had often done, baby kept biting it more emphatically, and looking pointedly at me as much as to say, "It's your business to come and pull it out."

In her ninth month she was greatly enraged one day because a mirror she was playing with was taken from her preparatory to giving her a bottle. Her mother told me afterwards that she talked to her as if she was ten years old : she laid the bottle in full view, and said she would get it when she was good. With lightning rapidity Patricia summed up the situation and became good.

About the beginning of the second year words are certainly appreciated and are often definitely demanded. Thus Margaret was wont to indicate her wish that I should name the different parts of a picture for her ; while Patricia would at times sit on the floor and taking thing after thing from her toy basket would hold each up in turn for her mother to name.

Mere babies not yet able to talk properly often under-

stand quite complicated sentences. In Margaret's sixteenth month I wanted her to give me a book to which she was clinging. I said, "Will Baby give Auntie the book if Auntie gives her a biscuit?" She promptly handed over the book, though I had not shown her the biscuit. She must have leaped to my meaning. In her twenty-second month Patricia, as was her pleasant custom, came to see me when I was dressing. On this particular morning I gave her some picture post cards she had not had before. When she perceived I was nearly ready to go downstairs she went and pushed the door shut, as if to say, "I'm not ready." When I began to gather up the cards she wept; but when I explained that we would take them downstairs with us, she cheered up and assisted in collecting them.

Development of Reason. If a baby is treated from the very first as a reasonable being, it is astonishing how soon he responds. In her seventh month Margaret would cease crying for her bottle when she was shown and told that it was being prepared, thus demonstrating her grasp of causal connection. Long before baby can understand words he makes generalizations, and argues therefrom. As soon as he knows to look on the floor for a toy he has pushed off the table, we must greet him as having attained the same rational level as ourselves.

For the sake of a quiet life many mothers seek to deceive their babies. This is a short-sighted policy, and is bad for both parties. For example, to induce baby to go to sleep mother lies down and pretends to go to sleep. By and by baby really goes to sleep, then mother slips away. Baby wakes, finds himself alone, and justly proclaims aloud that he has been unfairly treated. Next night he sleeps with one eye open, and again and again detects his mother's surreptitious efforts to escape.

When Patricia was eighteen months old an aunt whom she did not know came to spend a day with her. Her mother wished to go out to post a letter. She threw the

child her bag, and slipped out of the room while her attention was riveted on this. In a minute or two Patricia discovered her loss, went to the door and wept aloud. Her mother returned, addressed her letter, and then said, "Mother's going a ta-ta, Baby. Ta-ta." Feeling herself treated with consideration this time, baby continued her play quite happily.

Children very easily become the slaves of habit.[1] For example, if they are accustomed to go to sleep with one particular doll there is no peace for any one if that particular doll is not forthcoming at bedtime. Mothers should be on their guard against allowing such customs to become too rigid. They should not be unduly obliging.

Emotional Training. The emotional training given in the first year is quite as important as the intellectual. Unconsciously, but all the more exactly on that account the child models himself on those about him. If the voices round him are always pleasant, gentle, and good-tempered, his little cooing sounds are soon a delight to listen to. If he hears loud and angry tones it is amazing to notice how soon he "talks back" in just such tones. Temperament, which is usually attributed to heredity, is probably much more the product of the environment of the first year or two.

Baby's undeveloped soul is like the soul of an animal or of primitive man. He responds to influences which leave us cold, and is unmoved by many a thing which thrills us. It is our business to help him to use his powers on every plane of being in such a way that he may achieve the highest. This end some educators maintain is accomplished by play. That is not the case. It is accomplished by work; which to the child is not a curse but a joy. The work, however, must not be imposed by another: it must be self-imposed.

The first rule for those who have the privilege of guiding

[1] See Chapter X.

baby's early progress is to give him all the freedom possible. This does not mean that we leave him at the mercy of his impulses; it means that we help him to govern his own impulses in his own interest and in the interest of others.

The task of helper is not an easy one. From the nature of things a baby is ignorant, self-centred, often possessed of a determination which sticks at nothing and is immensely strengthened by opposition. I notice that when Patricia does anything undesirable, such as biting her sponge, pulling at the table-cloth, hammering polished furniture with a tin, her mother's gentle assertion, "Baby doesn't do that," seems to bring about its own fulfilment, whereas, "Baby must not do that," or physical interference, leads to emphatic repetition of the act.[1] Sometimes a quick removal of a forbidden article with an immediate direction of the attention elsewhere is successful. It is important to provide in every room frequented by the child some pleasurable occupation. He will readily fall into the habit of asking for that and letting other things alone. By such foresight loss of temper will often be avoided.

During the first year we may do much to accustom baby to bear with equanimity the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, which in these early days are largely derived from loss of balance and result in blue bumps. On the other hand by unwise sympathy we can make him very sensitive to such mischances. Some children, I believe, spontaneously hit the chair or table which has hit them, but this should not be encouraged. A healthy baby will ignore minor hurts, and even major ones will be amended promptly by mother's kiss. Then the incident should be closed at once and completely. A comforted baby will begin to cry all over again if his hurt is recalled to his mind.

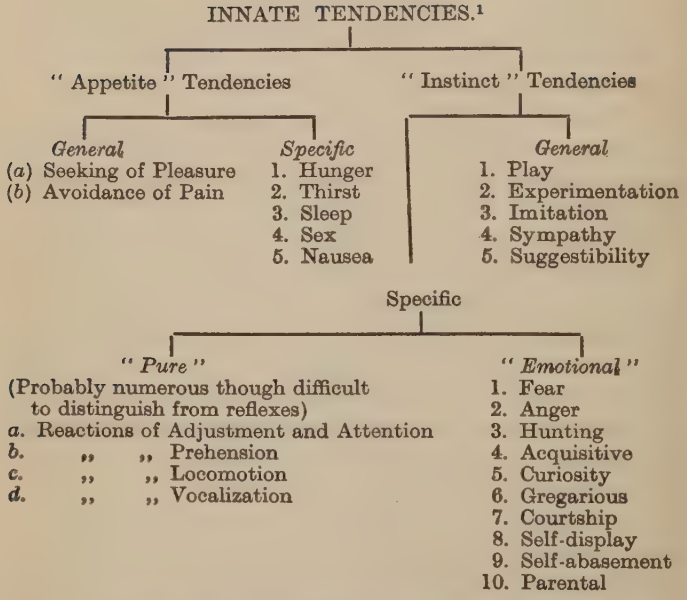
To direct the attention and the emotional aims outward

[1] These observations are interesting in connection with the question of how a compulsive repetition is established (cf. Chap. X).

not inward is the educational ideal. Many adults appear to be very sympathetic, because they identify themselves with any one in trouble ; their eyes fill with tears at the recital of another's woes ; but unless they feel the impulse to help, this is mere self-pity, and in children should never be encouraged. Baby's love, at first for himself alone, should pass outward to his parents, his brothers and sisters, his friends and companions. It has been abundantly shown that fixation at any point may lead to subsequent disaster, as when a girl's choice of a husband is determined by an unconscious, infantile fixation on her father.

Parents and teachers, who in the child's eyes are the same as parents, should aim at rendering the child independent. From babyhood the healthy child resents authority, and if he is over-much dominated he develops an " authority-complex " which results in great trouble later on. It is, I think, certain that much of the almost inconceivable stupidity of children in school—children who in after life show that they possess plenty of good sense—is due to an unconscious resistance to authority. Persistent bad spelling, for example, is often an unconscious assertion of independence, and the more the teacher urges and worries the child, the worse the spelling will become. Untidiness and naughtiness on the part of a baby often arise and are kept up in a similar way.

Love the child requires ; but it should be a restrained love. Demonstrations should be attuned to the child's need, not to ours. We should not interrupt work of obvious importance to the child by caresses or demands for caresses.



[1] Taken from Drever's *Instinct in Man*, p. 169.

CHAPTER II

APPETITE TENDENCIES

SELF-PRESERVATION and Race-preservation—in these two terms may be summed up Nature's instructions to all her children. In the lowest forms of living matter the activities subservient to those ends are simple; but in man where life reaches its high-water mark they are complex, and may usefully be grouped under several heads. Such an analysis, taken from Dr. Drever's *Instinct in Man*, will be found on the opposite page, and will repay close study.

The innate tendencies here distinguished are found in the higher animals as well as in man, and they show themselves very early in the life-history of the human infant. They may be regarded as the separate strands out of which by means of intelligence and memory human character in the individual is formed. They are our heritage from the past—the raw material of our personal life.

They may be likened to springs which can be released independently of one another. When so regarded, they explain the lightning changes and inconsistencies of babyhood. It will be noticed that opposition is inherent in them. Thus we find Self-Subjection contrasting with Self-Assertion; we find Fear which spells Flight, and Curiosity which spells Approach. How true it is that a *well-balanced* character is the ideal!

When applied to the behaviour of a child this Table acts as a prism, enabling us to sift out the pure colours which give the exact shade of conduct. Yet so rapidly does the

child's experience introduce subtleties of intertwining that interpretation demands much skill and caution.

For example, Patricia in her seventeenth month was sitting on the floor when a man, a stranger to her, came in and sat down. Soon after this she leaned forward, laid her cheek on the floor and remained absolutely still. When he moved away she sat up, and when he actually left the room she wept aloud. Now was this an example of self-subjection in the presence of a large stranger, or was it an inhibition of activity due to fear ? Did the cry release the fear-emotion, or did it express dissatisfaction that the situation had not developed further ?

The general appetite tendencies, the seeking of pleasure and the avoidance of pain, have long been recognized as powerful motive forces. Reward and punishment have been used from time immemorial by parents, teachers, magistrates and others, to drive the child along the path which in our opinion he ought to follow. Punishment in particular has been felt to be a duty ; and even yet there are many who cannot imagine a school or home in which punishment is never found as being anything but a scene of anarchy and a forcing-house for Bolshevism. " If he tells me a lie, what would I do but give him the belt ? " demanded a puzzled parent, with reference to his five-year-old son.

The doctrine that pleasure and pain are the sole driving forces in human life which used to be held by most psychologists but of recent years had been largely abandoned, has been revived by Professor Freud. " It seems," he says, " that our entire psychical activity is bent upon *procuring pleasure* and *avoiding pain*, that it is automatically regulated by the *Pleasure Principle*." For one great group of instincts, namely, those concerned with self-preservation (the Ego instincts), the task of avoiding pain becomes, according to his teaching, in the course of training

almost equal in importance to that of obtaining pleasure ; "the Ego learns that it must inevitably go without immediate satisfaction, postpone gratification, learn to endure a degree of pain, and altogether renounce certain sources of pleasure. Thus trained the Ego becomes 'reasonable,' is no longer controlled by the pleasure principle, but follows the Reality Principle which at bottom also seeks pleasure—although a delayed and diminished pleasure, one which is assured by its realization of fact, its relation to reality." [1]

Freud considers the transition from the pleasure principle to the reality principle to be one of the most important advances in the development of the Ego. The group of instincts connected with race-preservation (the sexual instincts) follow late and unwillingly through this stage ; and most human troubles are due to their reluctant and imperfect acceptance of the reality principle.

The distinction thus made between the pleasure principle and the reality principle is a useful one, and one which it is well to bear in mind. It is, however, difficult to see why Freud should insist that the pleasure principle is primary.[2] Logically it cannot be so, for in default of experience it is impossible to seek pleasure. When in the past an activity has been found pleasurable, it may be repeated for the sake of the pleasure ; but the first time the activity is performed its initiation must be different. Strictly speaking, pleasure and pain are not the normal aims of our innate tendencies at all ; they form the subjective aspect or colouring of all our conscious processes, which tend to be pleasurable or painful according as they are or are not obtaining satisfaction. There seems to be, as it were, a continuous range of feeling which runs from a high degree of pleasure down through lesser degrees till neutrality is reached, and then rises again

[1] *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis*, pp. 298–9.

[2] Freud has now to some extent modified this position (cf. Chap. X).

through low degrees of pain up to the extreme which our nature will bear. In any process which goes on for some time variations of feeling-tone may easily be detected.

How does observation of the infant accord with these considerations ? Let us take the first pleasure-giving activity, namely sucking. This reaction is the expression of the specific innate tendency to which we give the name hunger. If the tendency does not find satisfaction, that is, if the milk does not come, the babe shows signs of anger, of pain, one might almost say of despair. If the tendency does find satisfaction, then it is pleasurably toned. Now there is no doubt that the pleasure helps to sustain the activity, which ceases with satiety or fatigue ; that is, when the pleasure ceases or passes into pain. But the pleasure is determined by the satisfaction of a real need : the babe is following the reality principle. When " drugged with slumber and milk " he sinks to rest in his mother's arms, he expresses in the whole attitude of his little body the satisfaction that comes of work well done.

In various passages of this book I have tried to show that during the first year of life pleasure is derived chiefly from adaptation to and understanding of reality. This is the attitude natural to the infant which education ought to maintain and encourage. Instead of realizing this as its task, it too often hampers the child's progress, and even lures him from the straight path.

It is not to be denied that some children having had experience of a pleasure-giving activity begin to carry it on purely for the sake of the pleasure. The most serious objection to the comforter, so often provided by mother or nurse to keep baby quiet, is perhaps that it conduces to the finding of satisfaction in an activity which is self-enclosed. It is not the result of the activity that is found pleasing : it is the activity in and for itself. Originally the sucking is pleasant because of its association with the satisfaction of hunger. But now the pleasure principle is

followed: the reality principle deserted. In finding pleasure in the sucking by itself the child loses the substance and grasps the shadow. He sets his little foot for the first time on the primrose path which leads to the island of enchantment and doom.

One evening I was called in to see Patricia. "Look at this," said her mother, holding up a comforter. "Surely you're not going——" I began. "Just look," she replied, "it's so funny." She put the article to the infant's mouth. Never shall I forget the expression of utter disgust with which she protruded her lips, and pushed out the offensive object. I always knew she was a wise baby!

In some children the thumb or even the tongue or other part of the body performs the function of the comforter. Thumb sucking may become so passionate that a child may lose awareness of his actual environment. I was once consulted by a mother whose little daughter, aged three, had become a victim to this habit to such an extent that she ceased to note her surroundings, and one day actually fell downstairs. I advised her to teach the child to regard the habit as an enemy—a giant—which it was her knightly task to conquer. This calling in of the self-assertive instinct proved successful.

There are other pleasure-giving activities which are closely analogous to pleasure sucking. Such are nail biting, head nodding or banging, rocking in one's seat, dirt eating, etc. In some of these it seems as if physical pain may be not painful but pleasurable. I have seen a little girl hit her own face so persistently that she had to be restrained by arm bandages. In children with a low mentality, among whom was this little girl, such habits are very difficult to cure because the children are inaccessible to higher motives. In all children the habits may be strengthened by too direct opposition to them, and too much fuss. Such treatment may focus the child's attention on them and cause them to take on an obsessive character. We

should try to direct the child's attention to activities incompatible with the objectionable habit; we should aim at fostering all his tendencies which proceed according to the reality principle. The child engrossed in building blocks or playing ball has no time to suck his thumb.

In the pleasure obtained from such habits we find the beginnings of what Freud terms infantile sexuality (see p. 26). Dr. John Thomson seems to take a kindred view when in an article "On Some Curious Bad Habits in Children," he says: "Now, it seems to me, to put it plainly, and to compare small things with great, that such habits as we have been considering may possibly be best regarded as instances of a sort of *infantile dissipation*—instinctive attempts in a small way to find in gratification of the lower appetites a satisfaction which should only come from the exercise of higher faculties of the mind." [1]

To me they represent an early dropping of the gold thread of the reality principle for the tinsel sham of the pleasure principle—a desertion and substitution, which as we shall see later, may take place on the higher levels of mentality as well as on the lower.

When the psychologist speaks of the avoidance of pain he does not mean physical pain. Physical pain seems to be a special kind of sense experience which is usually unpleasant but not necessarily so. People who find pleasure in physical pain are not unknown; we call them morbid, and in discussions on the nature of pain we usually ignore them instead of paying them special attention as negative instances, which would clearly be the more rational course.

Physical pain has an interest of its own which causes some people to provoke it, as when one can scarcely refrain from stirring up a tooth known to be capable of great things. When pain is extreme and long lasting it is, I think, always found unpleasant. But a little pain may quite well be

[1] Cf. Chapter X for further consideration of such activities.

stimulating to some natures just as a little fear or sorrow may be found stimulating and so pleasant. The person who goes to see a tragedy, and says, "It was perfectly lovely; I cried all the time," is something of an enigma to people whose emotions run on more regular lines.

Physical pain as a factor in education is most legitimately and most effectively applied in the first weeks of life. If baby bites the mother's breast the slap, which is the mother's instinctive response, will do nothing but good. As the child grows older, pain of an educative nature follows upon the mistakes he makes in his treatment of things. He learns to walk steadily without bumping against the furniture; he learns to pick his steps and to keep his balance; he learns to be cautious with doors and drawers and other things that pinch. It is probable that we should not be over-careful to save him from this pain. It is salutary, and it is seldom so severe as we are apt to imagine. Baby's ready cry relieves the tension and the pain is very transient.

Physical pain, inflicted as a punishment, seems to me to be in quite a different category. It is usually administered with no consideration of the child's point of view, and is often most unjust. Moreover its nature and amount is too frequently determined by the mother's nerves and temper rather than by the offence. Very often it is not even successful in stopping the conduct against which it is directed. In high-spirited children the rod when unaccompanied by other more rational means of education simply arouses vengeful thoughts, and in some cases repetition of the forbidden act. In timid children it wakens fear and hate. An understanding of child nature, a love for the child, and consistent treatment from the beginning will cause any intelligent parent to marvel at the nonsense that has been talked about sparing the rod and spoiling the child.

The specific appetite tendencies are concerned very intimately with the preservation of life. Hunger, thirst, sleep, may become irresistible cravings. The recognition of this is the reason why Sir Philip Sidney's self-denying act on the fatal field of Zutphen has won undying fame. Because of their fundamental character the activities which satisfy these needs are perfect at birth. All infants sleep; almost all infants suck.

In civilized life the appetite tendencies are rarely allowed to manifest themselves in full force. In an orderly household breakfast, dinner, tea, bed form for the child a pleasant background to more interesting experiences. Even in the early months of life baby's first interest is far from being food; and many a mother finds she has to secure a quiet room for the eight months' babe in order to avoid his attention being altogether distracted from his meal.

Nausea. I follow Drever in considering Nausea among the appetite tendencies. In our physical life it plays a much less important part than hunger, thirst or sleep. This may be the reason why it is, as is pointed out below, so quickly taken over into the higher life of the mind.

MacDougall holds that Fear and Nausea between them account for all aversions except such as are the result of painful experience; that is to say, all instinctive aversions fall under one or other of these two heads. Disgust or Nausea expresses itself in the rejection from the mouth of an unpleasant substance; if the substance is actually swallowed we have the characteristic reaction of retching or vomiting. This reaction is now involuntary, but Darwin offers some evidence to show that our ancestors, like some animals, possessed the power of voluntarily ejecting food. He suggests that in man the power has died out because he can instruct his children verbally in the nature of food materials.[1]

[1] Darwin, *The Expression of the Emotions*, p. 270.

Be that as it may, it is certain that in human life the instinct is early raised to a higher plane and enters the service of the imagination. The impulse is released by idea far oftener than by fact. Thus Shakespeare says truly:

> There may be in the cup
> A spider steep'd and one may drink, depart,
> And yet partake no venom; for his knowledge
> Is not infected: but if one present
> The abhorr'd ingredient to his eye, make known
> How he hath drunk, he cracks his gorge, his sides,
> With violent hefts.

Children may swallow many things without injury to themselves before they have learned by sympathetic imitation of their elders that they are disgusting.

The instinctive sympathetic identification of oneself with others may in certain circumstances result in the repudiation characteristic of disgust. Many soldiers who for the first time saw comrades severely wounded suffered from vivid sensations of sickness followed in some cases by actual vomiting. "I remember well," says one of these, "my first experience in the trenches, when on coming out after an attack, I came upon a man lying on his back, his tunic and shirt open, with a large wound in the upper part of his breast, a piece of shell having obviously penetrated the lung, as on every breath the blood came spurting out. The wound was in all probability fatal, but another and I managed to dress it as well as possible under the circumstances. Leaving him to the stretcher-bearers we passed on, and I had not gone very far when sickness overcame me, accompanied by violent vomiting. My comrade, whose experience of these things was wider than mine, showed none of these symptoms, but admitted that he had been affected in the same way on a previous occasion."

In many people a visit to the ward of a hospital produces

similar sick feelings. Until custom blunts feeling these people are too sympathetic, in the literal sense of the term, to be useful.

"I once saw an omnibus run over a dog, which I then perceived in a convulsive struggle, its entrails protruding. I made a note subsequently of my own sensations. There was a severe shock somewhere near the stomach, a cold shudder, and an immediate sense of sickness, followed by a great weariness of the legs. After that I made a practice of asking my friends what were their experiences under similar circumstances, and I obtained information from thirty-eight in all. Three of them described a most disagreeable shock in the bowels, followed after a time by diarrhœa [1]; a fourth added to this a creeping shudder up the backbone. Five described the first sensation as a shock in the small of the back, followed by sickness. Three spoke of a shock in the calves of the legs, running thence up the body. Five told me of loss of power in the knees, as the first thing actually noticed; one of a shock in the arms, just above the elbow; one described a choking sensation, and six remembered nothing except a feeling of sickness in the stomach, which in severe cases would produce actual vomiting. Five described how the first sensation is a sharp shock in that part of the body corresponding to the place injured in the person or animal that has been hurt. Three spoke only of a strong tug at the heart, with an almost uncontrollable impulse to scream. Two spoke of a general thrill of horror, which makes it physically impossible to continue looking; one feels a fascination compelling him to look, while tremors of sickness well up, and a cold clammy sweat appears. Two described a sudden jump of all the muscles of the body, followed by an uncontrollable quivering. Nearly all spoke of severe cases as causing collapse, and all suffer more or less from

[1] Cf. the Biblical expression, "His bowels were moved with compassion."

trembling and whiteness of the skin, for some time after witnessing such an accident." [1]

The reactions described are obviously highly individual and complex. As has been hinted above, they depend in part on identification of the self with the sufferer. We note, for example, the pallor and the cold sweat of fear, and the quivering of the muscles associated with the frustrated impulse to flee. We mark the fascination which MacDougall regards as a compound of Disgust, Fear and Curiosity. More particularly do we notice the fact that some of those questioned felt pain or shock in the corresponding part of their own body (cf. p. 55-6). If the associated memories of the observers had been secured we should have found a rich wealth of material to account for the distinctive reactions.

Sex. It is often supposed that the sexual instinct is dormant till puberty, and that it is the awakening of this powerful instinct that accounts for the storm and stress that frequently characterize the years of adolescence. Of late this doctrine has been challenged by Freud, who has truly pointed out that there are many activities of childhood which are most easily understood if we regard them as the normal precursors of sexual activity.

In this country comparatively few people can consider the subject of sex in a simple and natural way. Every one, of course, is interested in it, but by no means every one likes to admit that he is. Feelings of reserve, even of shame, are very easily awakened in connection with it. For our present purpose it is necessary as far as possible to dismiss all such feelings from our mind. Let us take the word in a wide sense as denoting all the activities which spring from the second of the two great natural commandments referred to at the beginning of this chapter. The hunger of man to love and to be loved appears already in the child.

[1] Sutherland, *The Origin and Growth of the Moral Instinct*, II, p. 300.

For this universal craving Freud uses the term Libido. By the word Libido he denotes all the tendencies which in normal development culminate in activities necessary for the preservation and perpetuation of the race.

The Libido of the infant finds satisfaction at first in the act of sucking, and later in the stimulation of certain specially sensitive regions of the body. "If the infant could express itself it would undoubtedly acknowledge that the act of sucking at its mother's breast is far and away the most important thing in life. It would not be wrong in this, for by this act it gratifies at the same moment the two greatest needs in life. Then we learn from psycho-analysis, not without astonishment, how much of the mental significance of this act is retained throughout life. Sucking at the mother's breast becomes the point of departure from which the whole sexual life develops, the unattainable prototype of every later sexual satisfaction, to which in times of need phantasy often enough reverts. The desire to suck includes within it the desire for the mother's breast, which is therefore the first object of sexual desire; I cannot convey to you any adequate idea of the importance of this first object in determining every later object adopted, of the profound influence it exerts, through transformation and substitution, upon the most distant fields of mental life." [1] Many infants develop a habit of pure pleasure sucking (cf. p. 19), making use either of a comforter or of their own thumb or tongue; in these latter cases the Libido is enabled to dispense altogether with an external object. The pleasure associated with the functioning of the organs of excretion, and more especially the pleasure derived from the handling of these organs, are subsequent movements of the Libido in the direction of its ultimate physical aim.

To describe the pleasure derived by the infant from sucking as sexual pleasure is to many people repugnant.

[1] Freud, *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis*, p. 264.

The scientific justification of such an extension of the term is that it simplifies the subject and enables us to understand the normal development of the instinct, and also its aberrations much better than has before been possible. This better understanding will enable us to educate more wisely and so minimize the dangers which at present seem inherent in civilized life.

As the child leaves babyhood behind and begins to realize himself as a member of a community, his Libido is directed towards other people ; naturally the mother is the first love object, and frequently anger is directed against any one who interferes with his central place in her regard. At a very early age the child's behaviour may give unmistakable signs of sex differentiation ; I have seen a little girl about three affected in a very definite way by the entry of a man into the room ; she became coy and bashful ; she lowered her long lashes over her eyes and gave occasional coquettish glances in the direction of the disturber of the peace.

About this time a sexual curiosity normally develops which centres about the problem of birth. Frequently the question is forced on the child by the arrival of a little brother or sister ; but in the case of an intelligent child it may easily be raised without any such stimulus. The mother or nurse parries the inquiry by a reference to the doctor's bag or to the shop where babies are procured. For a time the little questioner is or appears to be satisfied ; but scraps of conversation that he hears, the facial expression of his informants, and his own growing knowledge of nature gradually bring him to realize that he has been deceived. By various signs he knows that there is no use making further direct inquiries ; but his failure to obtain satisfaction has served only to increase his curiosity. Moreover the shifty way in which his search for knowledge has been met, the apparent conspiracy that exists to keep him in the dark, the warning looks that he surprises, and

the references to " little pitchers," that he understands very well, though he gives no sign, all these things have not failed to impress upon him that there is a mystery here upon which he must meditate.

His handling of the sensitive parts of his own body (erogenous zones) referred to above may bring upon him threats that the parts concerned will be cut off or will drop off. Such threats are used thoughtlessly, and as the child receives them in silence or with loudly professed disbelief, it is often not known what a profound impression they make. The child often secretly persists in the bad habit, but he does so in fear, and with a strong feeling of guilt.

Much that children observe is unintelligible to them at the moment. Knowing this we often allow them to be present at times when if they were older or more experienced we would send them away. We treat them as if they were mentally blind and deaf, as indeed to a considerable extent they are. What we forget or neglect is that the experience is stored in the child's mind ; it is thus made available for reference, and later is more or less correctly interpreted. There are certain child-theories of birth which seem to be arrived at in this way. One of the most widely held of these is that the baby comes from the mother's body, which has to be cut to allow of its emergence. This theory accounts satisfactorily for the presence of the doctor at the time of a birth, and also for the fact that the mother is ill. This theory, if once held, may, even when it has been entirely forgotten or extruded from the mind, be instrumental in producing in a girl fear of marriage.

Now I have no desire to exaggerate the evil of education on the lines which I have sketched. Many children so educated seem to suffer no harm at all. They come later to understand and sympathize with their mother's attitude. It seems to them quite natural that she should find it difficult to speak frankly about sexual relations. At the same time there are others who are definitely

harmed by these deceptions and false theories, and in view of this undoubted fact it would seem that our right course is to meet the child on his own level and answer his questions as simply and trustfully as he asks them. If a child is old enough to ask a scientific question seriously, he is old enough to be given an honest answer. Such an answer should be as concise as possible, and should aim only at satisfying the child for the moment. If not repulsed or caused to feel he has taken a false step, he will return at his own best time.

Some mothers may feel doubtful about the wisdom of revealing to the little one of three or four years of age the secret of the strong bond of love which exists between them. If they decide to take this course, they will find that the child's attitude of simple and reverent acceptance makes all easy, and later when puberty arrives there will be no such barrier between mother and daughter or father and son as often exists at present and sometimes leads to great unhappiness and misunderstanding.

If the mother thinks it wiser to withhold the information asked for by the child, she should certainly refrain from making false statements. She will probably feel that she can truthfully say that the little baby is a gift from God, and that he will understand more when he is a little older. The important thing is that the child's confidence in his mother and his readiness to appeal to her should not be destroyed. Anything in the nature of physical bad habit must of course be stopped. But the best way to do this is not by prohibitions, which by fixing the child's attention on the habit tend to strengthen it, but by establishing another inconsistent with the undesirable one. No emotion should be shown, nor should punishment or threats of punishment be employed.

CHAPTER III

EMOTIONAL INSTINCT TENDENCIES

Most of the emotional instinct tendencies have been long and intently studied. In our own day McDougall in his *Introduction to Social Psychology* has done work of extraordinary value in simplifying and harmonizing the view which regards the instincts as unit characters providing the raw material of mind. I do not propose here to discuss this theory. I propose simply to consider how these tendencies manifest themselves in the normal child, and how they may best be trained in his own interests and in the interests of society.

From the point of view of the development of character the most important of the innate tendencies are those known as Self-Assertion and Self-Subjection. McDougall, who was the first to advance their claims to be regarded as simple primary instincts, calls them alternatively the tendencies to self-display and to self-abasement. They urge the child on to activities, which are largely instrumental in the development of his recognition of himself as a person and as related to other persons.

In later life these tendencies are less easily distinguished. Ideals of propriety and modesty limit their expression. Satisfaction of their needs is sometimes relegated to a large extent to the world of dreams. In childhood they are patent to the most casual observer as potent determiners of conduct. Consider this example given me by an eye-witness.

Two little girls were quarrelling, and one of them who

had a very violent temper struck her little companion on the face. After her anger died down she was extremely sorry for what she had done, and sought a means of restoring herself to the favour of her friend. Finally she decided that the other little girl should settle what her punishment was to be. Her little friend told her that she must lie down and allow her to walk over her. Not far from where they were standing was a rather muddy piece of ground. The penitent calmly walked over to that part, and lay down in such a way that her face was in contact with the mud. Her friend walked over her, and they then became as good playmates as before.

At first sight this looks like an instance of self-subjection. Yet when one looks at the episode more closely, it seems as if in the willing acceptance and more especially in the exaggeration of the punishment the self-assertive instinct found expression.[1]

One of the difficulties about administering punishment to some children is that the distinction conferred on them by the punishment more than compensates them for any pain or discomfort endured.

The negative self feeling, which is the emotional side of the instinct of self-subjection, is a component in all hero-worship and in all religion. It readily allies itself with fear just as the self-assertive instinct readily allies itself with anger. Where love exists between parent and child the latter's instinct of self-subjection naturally called into play by the former's power and wisdom becomes transfused by the tender emotion, and there results the complex feeling of gratitude. It is important that this mingling of these two emotions should take place, otherwise some of the loftiest heights of human experience will never be attained.

The manifestation of the self-assertive instinct in baby-hood is very marked. It is, I think, likely that its wrong treatment at that time is largely the cause of the storm and

[1] For a parallel case given by Perez see *The Dawn of Mind*, p. 83.

stress so often associated with adolescence. I will therefore treat it in some detail under a name which has of late years been happily applied to it.

The Will to Power. The will to power or the self-assertive instinct is strong in every healthy living organism. In an infant whose reactions are of the type well named by Dr. Rivers "all-or-none," the expression of this instinct is nothing short of alarming. We ourselves are hampered and obstructed in our activities by so many forces operating for the most part in the unconscious realm of mind and emanating from our stored experience, that we rarely if ever exert our full force in any one direction. This is fortunate, as we see when we study cases in which the infantile type has survived with little modification into maturity.

For example, in the paper this morning I read: "During a violent quarrel, the wife of a tinsmith at Dole, Jura, while her husband was leaning over the window-ledge, seized his legs and threw him into the street from the third storey. The man was terribly injured and died an hour afterwards." The infantile nature of this action is obvious. It is quite possible that the woman when not displeased with her husband was an affectionate wife.

The innate impulses are determined by the needs of the moment; they involve no view of life as a whole. When a woman wants to be rid of her husband she throws him out of the window. Later, when she has need of him, she would, even apart from the serious social consequences of her act, give all she possesses to restore him to life. In a passion baby dashes her favourite doll on the ground; the irreparable loss—and it should be irreparable—acts as a restraining force long after the incident has been forgotten.

The task of the educator is to help the child to form a moral ideal which will unify the innate tendencies and cause them to act, so as to further the deliberately accepted ends of the developing personality. In order that force may not

be lost these ends must not be imposed on the individual from without; they must be freely adopted by him. He must himself work these ideals into the very fibre of his soul. Otherwise ebullitions from the unconscious egocentric infant still alive within him may cause him in manhood oft-times to do the worse while seeing and approving the better. Hence the danger of thrusting too soon adult morality on the child.

The will to power expresses itself in two directions, first on the material environment, and second on the social environment.

Mastery over the Material Environment. The other day I was sitting on the sands observing humanity. "Would you laike a kyky?" A good solid mother was sitting near me, while beside her Biddy played and made no answer. "Would you laike a nana, and mother will make you some naice sand pies." Biddy was still deaf. "Give me your spade and I'll make a castle for you." Biddy passed her spade, which she was not using, and continued her own operations with her pail. It was a hot, hot day, but Biddy's mother made a respectable castle, which Biddy never condescended to look at.

This little incident is typical of a common adult attitude to childhood. To begin with the adult assumes that the child's first thought is for food. This is seldom the case, never unless the child is very hungry. I am speaking, of course, of young children. I do not know how soon food may begin to assume the important position it occupies in the lives of many adults. The "kyky" and the "nana" were nothing to Biddy in comparison with the joy of finding out the nature of sand, and so expressing her mastery. Secondly the adult assumes that the child wants results—for which, as a matter of fact, he cares little or nothing. It is the activity, the process that is dear to him. Hence he destroys his own work without compunction, even with joy, for so also does he feel his own power. As we grow

older many of us transfer our sense of value to the result, and so, alas! we may, in Walter de la Mare's expressive phrase, become "all tied up in yesterday." Professor Cizek, of Vienna, who has obtained such wonderful drawings from children, does not, I believe, allow the young artists to keep their work in case they may begin to value the outward rather than the inward achievement.

Little children show great ingenuity in devising activities which lead to increasing mastery of the environment. Patricia, the second of my baby instructors, has furnished me with many examples of which I quote a few in Chapter V.

In his endeavours to master his material environment baby should be let alone, so far as is consistent with his own safety and the reasonable rights of other people. As a rule his legitimate occupations should not be interrupted, but should be allowed to work themselves out to their natural end. It is well if we can even keep ourselves from watching; the child's attention is more entirely fixed on his task if he feels himself free of all scrutiny, however loving and appreciative. This freedom is extremely important if the task is a little dangerous. After Patricia began to crawl upstairs we often thought that she was much safer if no one watched her. It is true she did once roll down, but that was after she and we esteemed her quite secure. When not spurred on by opposition babies are cautious little souls, and may often be seen meditating a venture and giving it up as too risky. For example, in her fifteenth month Patricia crept to the stairs. Apparently no one noticed her. She climbed one step, sat on it and meditated. She then descended and came creeping back on hands and knees. If any one had chased her and brought her back, she would doubtless have repeated her attempt many times. A repetition-compulsion might have been established (cf. Chapter X).

The power over material things which is craved by the child is a legitimate power for which he is willing and

eager to pay the price of careful and prolonged experimentation. When we come to consider his bid for mastery over the social environment we find that the matter assumes a different aspect.

Mastery over the Social Environment. We have all heard of King Baby, and most of us do him willing homage. Servility, however, creates tyrants, and babies are no exception to this rule. Tyrant Baby deserves all he gets from the designer of comic post cards and the newspaper humorist. And like all tyrants he himself is the one who suffers most in the long run.

Let us examine some of the ways by which baby attempts to establish his rule, and let us consider how we ought to meet him.

Baby's strength lies in his weakness, in the appeal that weakness makes to us, and in the appalling determination which is the product of his complete lack of any scruple. He cries ; and an unwary father or mother or nurse carries him to and fro. He finds this motion pleasing ; gradually he drops off to sleep ; he is laid gently down, but not so gently that he is not aware of the change ; he cries again, is lifted and establishes his sway.

A good nurse nowadays is very strict with an infant, and will not allow him to be picked up or soothed. One often hears of babies who have never made any trouble. But I never feel sure whether their good character does not in part depend on their parents' kind forgetfulness. Margaret certainly gave her parents many wakeful nights, but she was a first baby, and found herself in a very ignorant and unsuspecting family. Patricia has not had such a fair field, but she has put up several good fights.

Margaret early formed a habit of crying whenever she woke. Patricia when a mere infant would often lie awake contentedly for a considerable time. Even in the second month her mother would sometimes wake in the night and see baby peacefully watching the night light. There were

however bad nights, which I am inclined to think were mainly due not to indigestion nor to teething, but to attempts to establish her authority.

Some evenings I was in charge, so I can speak from my own experience. Any baby can bully me, because I am a person full of doubts and fears, and acutely conscious of my own ignorance. Still Margaret had taught me something.

Patricia was eight weeks old, and her mother was out. She cried very loudly, and I endured for thirteen minutes. I then picked her up and held her a few seconds ; she went almost to sleep ; I put her back into her cot, and she slept for half an hour. She then cried. I patted her, which enraged her very much. After ten minutes, I took her up, and gave her a little water, which seemed to annoy her rather than anything else. I cuddled her a little and laid her down. She was fairly quiet for about seven minutes, but cried off and on for most of the evening. I think we may say the honours were easy.

In her second year Patricia once more had an opportunity of playing the game with me. About 7.30 I heard her crying. Making the excuse that perhaps a motor-car I had heard in the street had disturbed her I went up. " Baby go sleepy," I said, and went away. Then I bethought me and offered to let her make herself comfortable. She consented, crying all the time. Then I laid her down, still crying. I said, " Baby, say ta-ta," but she wouldn't. I said " Ta-ta " several times, and waited. She lifted her head to see if I was still there and lay down, renewing her cries. I thought her teeth might be troubling her, but a few nights before she had played a similar game with me, and had finally given herself away by laughing. So I hardened my heart, said " Baby, *stop* crying, ta-ta," and clattered downstairs to convince her that her wiles were of no avail. I heard a few little final sobs, but nothing more.

By this time (twenty months) Patricia, though she could

not resist the powerful instinct which pushed her on to self display, was really a sensible child, and knew what was good for her. It happened one evening that she cried long and loud, and no one heard. When at last her mother went up she found a hot, sobbing, sleepy, dishevelled baby sitting up in her cot. She gave her the opportunity she wanted, and then, as her sobs continued, she brought her down to give her a little milk. Baby yelled. When the milk was ready she yelled louder than ever and would have none of it. She was carried upstairs. She " gu'd." She was laid in her bed. With an " Ah " of content she snuggled down and said " Ta-ta " to her departing mother.

A few complete records of a child's crying would be of value. It is difficult for us to make our treatment consistent. Vaccination, teething, digestive disturbances, provide us with excuses for giving baby the attention he craves —attention which we too love to render. My impression is that if Patricia succeeded in securing attention one night she generally tried for it the next night ; whereas if she tried and failed she generally slept sound the night following. Many mothers cannot bear their little ones to cry themselves to sleep ; but Patricia did this several times, and the effect seemed to be most salutary.

As baby grows older he discovers another region in which he can assert himself pleasantly. He plays with his food ; he will have it, he won't have it ; and then again he will have it. Children three or four years of age—to say nothing of thirteen or fourteen—often eat far less than they require and wish for the sake of the pleasure of finding themselves the centre of interest.

For the same reason trouble may arise with the excretory functions, about which the mother is rightly particular.

The Effect of Opposition. In all cases opposition strengthens the child in the course he has entered upon. From my notes on Patricia I cull an instructive example.

Tenth Month. This morning I was showing baby some

wooden letters. She took shape after shape in her own hand, examined it carefully, and then handed it back to me. After doing a dozen or more she suddenly became determined to put one in her mouth. I prevented her. She insisted. I said, " Little girls never, never put letters in their mouths." Her resolution strengthened. I took away the letters and gave her a spoon, saying she could put it in her mouth if she liked. She wouldn't do it. I coaxed her. No, she waved it about a little, but wouldn't put it in her mouth.

Evidently the value of the activity to the child lay in the opposition to my will. Had the impulse arisen from any gum irritation, the spoon would have been accepted as substitute.

We ought to make much more rational use than we do of the child's joy in measuring his will against ours. All those men—and there are many—who attain to eminence in their chosen career in face of determined discouragement on the part of their parents, should reckon the parental opposition as making a positive rather than a negative contribution to their success. Very true is the saying of Edmund Burke : " He who wrestles with us strengthens our nerves and sharpens our skill. Our antagonist is our helper."

If the self-assertive instinct is repressed rather than directed, or if adult ideas of what is seemly are accepted too readily by the growing child, we may find what seems like an over-development of the counterbalancing instinct. The child becomes shy, shrinks unduly from strangers, is miserable when asked to show off his little accomplishments. In such cases the dream life may reveal the strength of the original tendency. Thus one of my students writes :

" I do not like people to take too much notice of me, and that is one of the reasons why I hate being ill, because then my mother and father and all at home come and ask me how I am keeping, and do everything to make me comfort-

able. Also I do not wear things which are too conspicuous.

" Yet several times I have dreamed that I am dangerously ill, and that I know my mother when she attends me is restraining herself from crying. I die and wonder what will happen. My people will go into mourning for me. Stories of my life will be told. I wonder if I will be missed. Will everybody that once knew me know that I have died ? etc. In the morning I expect my mother to be very kind to me seeing that I have returned to her.

" Lately I had the King and Queen as my distinguished guests."

The self-display tendency is clearly revealed in the dreams, and it becomes apparent how much psychic energy must be taken up in restraining its manifestation during the day.

The concept of inner conflict is as old as St. Paul, and probably much older. In one form or another it is an experience familiar to all of us. In the light of what is sometimes spoken of as the new psychology this concept takes on a more profound significance, and becomes instrumental in clearing up many hitherto insoluble riddles of conduct.

We have already seen that opposition or conflict is inherent in those primitive instincts which are common to us and the higher animals. When the distinctively human plane of life is attained, where the energy of the instincts is to a considerable extent locked up in ideals and interests, conflict becomes more serious and more prolonged. We now know that such conflict may be brought to an end by the exile from consciousness of one of the combatants in such a way that it remains as a lurking enemy within the unconscious realm of the mind, and may upon occasion influence conduct. Repression, as this process is technically known, is a defence mechanism. Thus does the mind defend itself from the pain of conflict. When the defence partially breaks down ideas or impulses to action which in

more or less disguised fashion represent the repressed material penetrate consciousness and often give considerable trouble because they appear to the Self alien, unwelcome, irrational, frequently absurd. Often they are attended by a compulsive force, so that they are carried out into action, though the doer feels that they are not done by his free will, and that he is not really responsible for them. Even when the defence is perfectly successful, so that no conflict is felt, nor do any untoward manifestations take place, it seems likely that such success is obtained at the cost of locking up energy which should be available for the ordinary purposes of life.

In view of recent psychological work it seems impossible to doubt that " repression " arises most often through an unwise education which hastes after external results, and takes no thought for inner achievement, inner harmony.

It is, however, important to remember that the repression which has a pathological effect is not parental repression ; it is repression exercised by the individual himself, and it follows upon inner conflict. The new psychology lends no more countenance than does the old psychology to the notion that children should be allowed to do whatever they like.

Fear. A very important contribution to the problem of fear is to be found in Freud's recently published lectures on Psycho-analysis. It is difficult in short compass to give a clear idea of the theory, but its bearing on the psychology and training of childhood is so direct that it is impossible to pass it over.

Every instinct, according to modern psychology, has its emotional or affective component.[1] Thus Fear is the affect of that instinct which as an activity takes the form of Flight. Now Freud believes that certain specialized affects or emotions are so specialized because they are of the nature of a repetition of some very significant previous experience.

[1] McDougall, *Introduction to Social Psychology*, p. 28.

In the case of such a widespread, practically universal affect as Fear, the archetypal experience must obviously also be universal. What then is the original terrifying experience of which subsequent dreads are only the repetition ?

At this point I must quote Freud's own words :

" We believe we know what this early impression is which is reproduced as a repetition in the anxiety affect. We think it is the experience of birth—an experience which involves just such a concatenation of painful feelings, of discharges of excitation, and of bodily sensations, as to have become a prototype for all occasions on which life is endangered, ever after to be reproduced again in us as the dread or ' anxiety ' condition. The enormous increase in stimulation effected by the interruption of the renewal of blood (the internal respiration) was the cause of the anxiety experience at birth—the first anxiety was therefore toxically induced. The name Angst (anxiety)—angustiæ, Enge, a narrow place, a strait—accentuates the characteristic tightening in the breathing which was then the consequence of a real situation, and is subsequently repeated almost invariably with an affect. It is very suggestive too that the first anxiety state arose on the occasion of the separation from the mother. We naturally believe that the disposition to reproduce this first anxiety condition has become so deeply engrained in the organism, through countless generations, that no single individual can escape the anxiety affect ; even though, like the legendary Macduff, ' he was from his mother's womb untimely ripped,' and so did not himself experience the act of birth."

According to Freud, " real " fear, the fear which is the outcome of the instinct for self-preservation takes the form not of dread but of caution. Of this kind of fear children possess comparatively little. The other kind of fear is allied to the unreasoning phobias so common in

"nervous" troubles, and is due to undischarged Libido. This pent-up, unsatisfied Libido is converted into fear, which is indeed the fate of any affect which belongs to a "repressed" system of ideas.

What can be learned as to the truth of this theory from the behaviour of the young child? Once more I quote Freud's own words. "The small child is first of all afraid of strange people; situations become important only on account of the people concerned in them, and objects always much later. But the child is not afraid of these strange people because he attributes evil intentions to them, comparing their strength with his weakness, and thus recognizing in them a danger to his existence, his safety, and his freedom from pain. Such a conception of a child, so suspicious and terrified of an overpowering aggressivity in the world, is a very poor sort of theoretical construction. On the contrary, the child starts back in fright from a strange figure because he is used to—and therefore expects—a beloved and familiar figure, primarily his mother. It is his disappointment and longing which are transformed into dread—his Libido, unable to be expended, and at that time not to be held suspended, is discharged through being converted into dread. It can hardly be a coincidence, too, that in this situation, which is the prototype of childish anxiety, the condition of the primary anxiety state during birth, a separation from the mother, is again reproduced."

When Anxiety or Fear is thus produced it may be attached to any external object, but is of course most easily attached to objects which the child or adult has come to regard as dangerous. Its neurotic character is betrayed by its inaccessibility to reason, and its intensity, which goes far beyond that watchful alertness which is the right preparation for possible flight.

Freud considers that children bring very little real anxiety or, as we may call it, cautiousness into the world

with them. For their own safety they have to be trained in apprehensiveness.[1] "Now," he says, "if some children embrace this training in apprehensiveness very readily, and then find for themselves dangers which they have not been warned against, it is explicable on the ground that these children have inherently a greater amount of libidinal need in their constitution than others, or else that they have been spoiled early with libidinal gratifications. It is no wonder if those who later become nervous also belong to this type as children; we know that the most favourable circumstance for the development of a neurosis lies in the inability to tolerate a considerable degree of pent-up Libido for any length of time."

One other point in Freud's theory must be mentioned, because, if true, it proves the enormous importance of a right understanding and a right guidance of the very early years of life. "Infantile phobias," he says, "are not merely prototypes of those which appear later in anxiety hysteria, but they are a direct preliminary condition and prelude of them. Every hysterical phobia can be traced back to a childish dread, of which it is a continuation, even if it has a different content and must be called by a different name."

Freud's theory has still to stand the test of criticism, but I do not think anyone can fail to see that it contains much which must be regarded as a valuable contribution to our understanding of some of the most difficult problems of child behaviour.

I have here before me a bundle of reminiscent studies written by young students on the subject of their childish fears. As I read them certain generalizations form themselves in my mind which it may be interesting to consider

[1] I am not sure that Freud here does justice to the child's sense (cf. p. 34 for a baby's caution). Apparent want of caution is often due to the mother's over-caution and the reaction on that of the child's self-assertive instinct.

in connection with this far-reaching theory of Freud's.

Very often a fear dates from some definite painful occurrence, as a fear of dogs from the bite of a dog ; or a fear of weasels and rats from the bite of a ferret. An interesting point is the recurrence of those fears, even when they are known to be groundless. The mechanical nature of this recurrence comes out even more clearly when the object of the fear is inanimate. For example, a child falls on a pail and is badly hurt ; for a long time thereafter the sight of a pail produces pallor, screams, and flight. Or a fright is experienced at a certain place. Thereafter the place is avoided or is approached with fear. The fact that a habit sequence is so easily established may be regarded as strengthening Freud's contention that there is a reminiscent element in fear, or we may merely be dealing with an elemental repetition-compulsion.[1]

In very many cases the fear is attributed to some alarming tale. Several writers mention fear of earwigs. Two of them date the fear from hearing that an earwig had crept into some one's ear and thence into the brain, where it bred many little earwigs, and so brought about death. It is quite conceivable that in some cases the story is forgotten, but the fear remains. A fear of the moon is sometimes mentioned, and is once definitely explained as a fear lest the man should come down. It is scarcely necessary to point out here that many of these fears would never have arisen if we would keep to the truth in dealing with children.

If a specific fear arises after the child has come to understand speech one should be quick to suspect that it has been produced by unwise talk, or stories which have suggested fear. Consider this, " Between the ages of six and seven I was very much afraid of feathers of any kind. A bunch of feathers, or a feather duster, were terrifying objects to me, especially if any one waved them in front of

[1] Cf. Chapter X.

my face. I imagined they were uncanny birds of some kind, which could peck out my eyes, or peck off my nose, or some such horrible thing." For this fear it is not impossible that our old friend, "Sing a song of Sixpence," may have its share of responsibility.

"About the age of six," says another writer, "I could not be prevailed upon to go to bed alone. I had always to have some one sit beside me while I went to sleep. This was all the more strange because up to that time I didn't object in the least to being left alone. I have an idea that it was some of the stories told me at school that made me so nervous when left in the dark."

Fear that is due to pent-up or converted Libido is fundamentally the product of loneliness, the absence of the beloved person. In my papers I find some evidence in favour of this explanation. For example, a child terrified of the dark will seek her mother, and although still in the dark will feel quite safe beside her. Again, on a lonely road in the dark, the frightened child whistles or sings. Were the fear a reasonable one, a fear, for example, of being attacked by some evil-disposed person, the course would be a foolish one. It relieves the neurotic fear partly perhaps by distracting the attention, partly by producing an illusion of company. But it certainly seems to show that the fear is not a "real" one.

Other terrors, even that of spiders, may be lightened by company. One writer states that in her case the terror was "diminished according to the numbers who were at the same time watching the movements of the insect."

Here is a case where the dread of death seems to be at bottom due to the hunger for the loved mother. "When I was about five or six years I had a great dread of death. For a long time I could scarcely sleep at night for this fear. I would lie in bed imagining all sorts of things, and then in desperation I would waken my sister and make her put on the light. I would then get out of bed and go to the

mirror, where I expected to see some signs of death in my face. Not seeing these signs I would return to bed but still could not sleep, and finally would get up and go to my mother's bedroom, where I always felt safe, and where I would at once fall sound asleep.

"I don't know when or in what way I was cured of this fear, but I know it went on for quite a long time and was most disagreeable for every one."

Fear of a drunken man is very common, as is also fear of a policeman, sweep or coalman. The fear of those last mentioned is usually produced by threats that they will come and carry off the child if he is naughty. The separation from his mother which would thus be brought about may perhaps cause this particular fear to take on some of the characteristics of neurotic anxiety.

Sometimes fear does not develop at the time of the occurrence, but arises later. This may happen when there is actual danger, which is not realized by the child at the time, but is brought home to him by the talk of adults and his own later reflection. Or it may occur when an event not itself dangerous lends itself as a suitable point of attachment for neurotic dread.

The intensity of childish fear is shown by its liability to recur even after many years. Here is an example which brings out the depth of the impression.

"When quite a small child I lived in a very lonely part of the Highlands, and not being in the least afraid I was greatly given to wandering off by myself. This was rather dangerous, as there were two large rivers quite near, so my nurse, to cure me of this habit, told me that a great beast called the 'cawing beast' lived up in the hills and would run off with me if it found me alone. Threats of this kind being of no avail, one day my nurse dressed up in a big cloak and hood and appeared from behind a rock in front of me when I was a good distance from home. I fled in terror, and nothing would induce me to go up the hill alone

again, even when everything was explained. A few years later I went to live in a different part of the country, and of course forgot all about the ' cawing beast ' and my fears. But five years ago I went back to my old home for a holiday, and one day went for a walk up the hill by myself. I had not gone far when I was seized by the same terrible fear that I had experienced in childhood, and I had to return home as quickly as possible. I do not know why it should have come back as soon as I went back to the place associated with it ; I knew perfectly well there was absolutely no reason for being afraid, but yet I could not master the terrible dread of being there alone among the hills."

Such facts as these, showing the indelible nature of childish fear, help us to accept Freud's contention that infantile phobias are a necessary pre-condition for the hysterical dread of later years. By saving our little ones from fear we might do more than we have hitherto thought possible to preserve for them the blessing of a sound mind, which, as we now know, goes far towards meaning a sound body.

" The teacher may pride himself on getting Smith Minor through an examination to-day," said Dr. Crichton Miller at the meeting of the British Association (1922) ; " twenty or thirty years later Mr. Smith, suffering from nervous breakdown and insomnia, will tell his consultant : ' Yes, the sinister individual who comes to me in my nightmares, is very like a certain master I had at school, who was a regular slave-driver. I used to wake up thinking of my work and of him, and I think it was then that fear first entered my life.' "

Many people do not really grow up at all ; they simply wall up the child within them, and when through ill-health or unkind circumstances the defence weakens, the child bursts forth all the stronger and all the more unreasonable for his incarceration.

Very marked is the way in which fear recurs at night

either before sleep comes on or in dreams. Children who love ghost stories by daylight have cause in the darkness to repent their temerity. That fear is at its worst at night may be regarded as evidence in favour of Freud's theory, for it is then that the child most misses the beloved mother who was with him so constantly in infancy.

The law of transference is a well-established law of our emotional life.[1] Some fears which appear inexplicable may very well be examples of the working of this law. In one case a little boy was given a carved wooden bear. He took it in his hands, but immediately began to draw back. For a little while he studied it, held away from him, then suddenly he pushed it away, crying bitterly. His mother and father tried every manner of persuasion, all to no purpose. This behaviour may have been due to the child having come in contact with a snapping dog and finding a resemblance between the bear and the dog.

Fear originally aroused by the father is easily transferred to the teacher ; and probably all through life the variety of emotion awakened in different people by the same occurrences is to be attributed to the fact that much emotion is always dependent on unconscious associations.

The regularly occurring " transference " which takes place when certain patients are treated psycho-analytically, is an example of an emotional attitude towards the physician which is determined not by present relations but by the patient's past relations with some one else—often his father.

The two Self-Instincts and Fear have been treated somewhat fully because of their great importance from the point of view of training. The others may be more briefly discussed.

Anger is readily aroused in the infant if his self-assertive tendency is interfered with. Such anger is quite a wholesome sign, but because it is a bad thing for a child to form

[1] Mellone and Drummond, *Elements of Psychology*, p. 228.

a habit of being angry we should as far as possible arrange the environment so as to give him legitimate scope for his activities. When one hears of a baby, formerly peaceful and happy, developing violent fits of passion, it may mean that he has discovered that thus he can get his own way, or it may mean that the arrival of a little brother or sister has not been tactfully managed, and that the ex-baby feels he has been unfairly treated. Instances are on record where children of two have actually killed the little being that they think has supplanted them in their mother's affection.[1] Such a possibility should be guarded against by waking in the child the protective instinct towards the little new-comer.

Curiosity is a very valuable endowment. Perhaps among all the simple tendencies this is the most distinctively human. Many little children have it to an embarrassing degree. It is responsible for much of what we call mischief, yet its eradication would mean intellectual stagnation. There is, we must admit, such a thing as morbid curiosity. This arises simply because the wholesome and natural curiosity of the child is not satisfied. When a child in all seriousness asks a question of evident moment to himself, we should answer it simply, directly, and truthfully.

The child's curiosity is much purer than adult curiosity. He is interested in facts as facts. He does not assume towards them an attitude of blame or even of pity. An illuminating story is told of, I think, Queen Victoria, the Prince Consort, the two eldest royal children, then very young, and a visitor to the Palace who had a club foot. The Queen and the Prince debated whether they should warn the children beforehand to take no notice of the deformity. They decided they would say nothing, but trust to the children's good feeling. The visit passed off

[1] See *Functional Nervous Disorders in Childhood*, by Leonard G. Guthrie, p. 95 (Oxford Medical Publications).

with no untoward incident, and the parents thought they might express to the young people their pleasure. The children's reply was, "Oh, we asked him about his foot the first evening; and he said if we would come to his bedroom in the morning he would show it to us, and he did." If this story is not true, it is at least true to life. The visitor was able to meet the children on their own level of pure interest in a strange fact. It is of course comparatively seldom that the adult can do this.

Courtship. It is sometimes claimed that in courtship we have an instinctive tendency which does not show itself in childhood. But one has only to watch little children with unprejudiced eyes to see that this view is a mistaken one. Mr. Platt, in his charming book on the *Joy of Education*, gives evidence to this effect. Boy and girl friendships in a co-educational school are, he says, very common and are entirely to be encouraged. Some of them acquire a definite romantic flavour. "These attractions may occur at almost any age; I have known of some quite pretty ones where the pair were both under eight, and one especially where the boy was a charming unselfish cavalier to a very dear little companion; he grew to be a very manly interesting lad."

Antonio Fogazzaro, author of *The Saint*, "was only six when he was caught writing down in secret the name of his first love." [1]

If the course of true love does not run smooth, the outcome may be very serious. For example, not long ago a daily paper reported the suicide of a boy of fourteen whose little lady-love had ceased to look on him with favour.

The Hunting Instinct. The emotional aspect of this instinct has not received any name; it is characterized by a high degree of pleasurable excitement, which excitement in children seems to arise whether they play the part of

[1] T. Gallarati-Scotti, *Life of Antonio Fogazzaro* (Hodder & Stoughton).

hunter or of hunted. It is difficult to understand the extraordinary passion of little children for being chased. Some people have maintained that the fox enjoys the hunt as well as do the hounds. Certainly in long-past ages man's ancestors must have often known the excitement of being pursued as well as the excitement of pursuit; and must often have swelled with satisfaction after successfully eluding their enemies. May the little child's joy in being chased be due to faint reminiscences of such satisfactions? Certainly in many children the emotion passes readily into fear; in some little tots this transition takes place so easily that they refuse to play a chasing game, and in almost all children dream fears are prone to be associated with fleeing from a terrible enemy.

The Instinct of Acquisition. The magpie, the squirrel, the dog, the monkey and other animals have tendencies to accumulate objects and hoard them. Little children show a similar instinctive tendency. Every teacher knows the little boy whose jersey has to be turned down before he leaves school to see what trifles he has gathered in the course of the morning. In the miser we see the hypertrophy of this valuable instinct. The collections made by children under its urge may be used by a skilled teacher so as to enrich the interest of their lives.

Gregariousness. Nowadays some writers are disposed to make much of what is called the herd instinct. They regard it as on an equal footing with the two fundamental tendencies to preserve life and to continue the race. They recognize, what is true, that man's great achievements have been possible only because society, as at present constituted, is like a great organism which is possessed of immortality. By means of this social life each individual is enabled to enter upon his racial heritage and to stand on the shoulders of his predecessors. Gregariousness, the tendency of individuals to cling together in groups, is certainly a pre-condition of life on any high mental level.

Very young children are supposed to show little or none of this tendency. H. G. Wells's description of the nursery of Joan and Peter, where the practical nurse, in order to keep the peace, divided the room and all the toys evenly between the two children will appeal to every mother. But though little children have not learned to share, they do enjoy the presence of other children. Even a baby will give marked signs of satisfaction at the presence of other little ones, and will exhibit signs of discomfort if it realizes itself as alone.

Parental Instinct. According to McDougall, who deals with this instinct at some length in order to justify its claim to be regarded as primary, the distressed cry of a child is the original provocative of the protective impulse and the tender emotion which together make up the parental instinct. "It would be easy," he writes, "to wax enthusiastic in the cause of an instinct that is the source of the only entirely admirable, satisfying, and perfect human relationship, as well as of every kind of purely disinterested conduct."

The difficulty of accepting this view of the instinct is that it leaves quite unexplained the emotional attitude of the child towards the mother. Now it is quite clear to any observer that the child's love impulse does at a very early age go out to the mother, first perhaps as the source which satisfies his physical hunger (cf. p. 27), but very soon as the source which satisfies his mental hunger—as the fount of all his joy. Primitive sympathy also helps to make the love relation mutual, and in later life one rarely, if ever, sees a love bond which does not show something of the mother-child attitude.

CHAPTER IV

GENERAL INSTINCT TENDENCIES

Play. To distinguish between play and work is much less easy than one would at first be inclined to think. The difference is not to be found in the activity itself; for the same activity may be work at one time and play at another. We speak of playing games, such as cricket, football, chess; yet we find that to people who take up these games professionally they become work. Indeed it is probable that games can never be purely an expression of the play instinct. No one who plays with any zest can fail to notice that they involve the self-assertive tendency to an extent that causes the mental attitude to be more strenuous than that adapted to play.

It is often maintained that the little child spends his whole time in play. This is, however, far from being the case, unless we start by defining play as any activity engaged in for the pleasure it brings and for no material result. Such a definition would include almost all the instinct-prompted activities of childhood, many of which resemble work rather than play. Take, for example, the sand constructions so dear to the child mind. At these castles the child works hard; he works to the point of fatigue and beyond it. He defines his purpose, and he is not content till he achieves it. If any one destroys his work he is angry; although if the other party persists in destruction he may lose his serious attitude and join in an undirected frolic.

All the higher animals play, and Karl Groos maintains

that the purpose of their play is to give preliminary practice to those instinctive tendencies which will later be harnessed to the serious purpose of gaining a living. According to this theory play would not be itself an instinct; it would be a general term denoting any activity engaged in simply for its own sake.

There is nevertheless an easily distinguished mental attitude to which we give the name "playful." This attitude is assumed spontaneously by the little child—at least by the child reared in happy circumstances. This playfulness is seen in puppies and kittens when we roll them over on the floor and handle them; it appears under similar circumstances in a young baby. The first self-initiated play is probably Peep-bo, when baby hides his face for a moment and then laughingly pushes aside the cover. This may occur as early as the sixth or seventh month. Such frolicsomeness seems to express the pure joy of living, a delight in variety of sense experience. Such play has, of course, a very definite educational value.

Imitation. At a very early age the play instinct mingles with that of imitation, and many of the most valuable plays of childhood are imitative. Even in the second year baby begins to imitate his mother's activities. Gradually he insinuates himself as far as he can into the life of his elders. The doctor's children play doctor and patient; the clergyman's preacher and congregation. The observation shown in these plays is often remarkable. The exact copy with which the children present us is not derived from purposeful imitation such as we ourselves would employ. The instinctive imitation which characterizes the early years of life is for the most part unconscious and is marvellously exact. On it depend tone and accent, which indeed many people succeed in "catching" all their lives; they return from a week's visit to Ireland, for example, with a distinct brogue.

It is very hard to say how much of the likeness children have to their parents may be due to this unconscious imitation. They study with such intensity the movements, gestures, attitudes, habits, of others that unconsciously they reproduce them. Any peculiarity of speech or gait, such as lisping, or limping, presents for many children irresistible material for copy. Margaret was just three when she said to me one day, "This is how grandpapa walks, isn't it?" And she bent her little figure and assumed the gait of an old man.

It is, I think, not impossible that children may give to their growing body a direction which will affect all their later life. "A small girl, the daughter of very 'horsey' parents, was trying to entertain a boy cousin a little younger than herself. After taking him into the stables and showing him the horses, she turned to him and said, 'I daresay, if you are *very* good, you might be a groom some day.' To which came the reply, 'No, I shan't; when I grow up I shall be exactly like father—skin showing through my hair and all.'"[1]

The development of an illness to which the family is subject, or even death at the age normal to one's precursors, may be brought about by unconscious imitation.

Sympathy. Closely allied to such imitation is Sympathy in the primary meaning of the term. Sympathy when regarded as a simple instinctive tendency means our ability to reflect the feeling of another, to experience it ourselves. Margaret, even at nine years of age, can scarcely restrain her tears if one pretends to cry in her presence. Some people carry this kind of sympathy to such a pitch that it leads to Identification, as in the following reminiscence. "I remember in the story (I think it was) 'Tom Thumb,' when a cart passed over one of his legs, I didn't in the least imagine myself the hero, yet I thought I heard

[1] F. D. How, *The Book of the Child.*

the bones crack in my leg as the wheel passed over it."

This kind of sympathy does not always give rise to any disposition to help which is the element which we deem essential in what we ordinarily call sympathy. Indeed, in certain circumstances one's vivid realization of another's suffering may incapacitate one altogether ; or it may lead to a tendency to avoid those in grief, and to seek the company of those who rejoice. We must not blame over much the sensitive child who shrinks from the presence of the mourner.

Suggestibility. Through our power of sympathy we enter into and develop in ourselves the emotions of others. In a similar way, by means of what is called suggestibility we accept from others our beliefs.

All adults are suggestible, but children are pre-eminently suggestible, so much so that no one yet knows to what extent the course of their lives may be altered by making use of this endowment.[1]

Many of the beliefs that we hold most tenaciously are beliefs which have been instilled into us in our susceptible youth. These beliefs we are unable to justify. Often we are unable even to examine them without prejudice. They appear to us self-evident. Those who would dispute them appear to us either wilfully blind or incredibly stupid. Much of the heat that is practically always engendered when people argue about religious or political questions, arises from the fact that in these regions the beliefs on both sides are not the result of reasoned consideration, but have been blindly accepted.

The progress of the world might be hastened if in regions where it is possible to ascertain objective truth we were to refrain from impressing opinions on people too young to judge for themselves.

In human life, however, belief often ranks as a determining factor in the event, and when this is the case we may

[1] Baudouin, *Suggestion and Auto-Suggestion.*

often legitimately make use of the suggestibility of children to their great profit.

A teacher who was attending one of my courses of lectures told me that on returning home one day he found his little girl had badly injured the nail of one of her fingers. The child naturally shrank from having it touched, but as the finger had been only hurriedly bound up she was told her father must dress it properly. He inquired whether it had been washed with hot or cold water. On being told hot he said, " Well, we'll use cold this time, and you won't feel any pain. You won't feel any pain." Sure enough, the dressing was effected with no pain ; only a throbbing was felt in the injured part.

The remarkable work of Emile Coué has of late years done much to popularize knowledge of the extent to which the physical organism is amenable to Suggestion. It is to be hoped that his demonstration will lead to a realization both of the evil and the good that in childhood may be brought about by this still uncomprehended power. Our besetting sin of yielding to illness might be largely eliminated if in childhood we were never exposed to unwholesome suggestion.

Consider, for example, Train Sickness, which is a worry to many grown-up people. I should not wonder if in many of them it began in very much the same way as it began in Margaret. My notes on this subject are not so full as I should like, because at first I did not realize quite so clearly as I do now how little incidents, which seem of no significance at the time, may have an important bearing on the child's subsequent history. I have, however, enough to be suggestive. I shall give the record of her chief journeys, with their dates.

2. vi. 13. Date of birth.

18. vii. 13. Journey from Manchester to Edinburgh. Cried after each bottle in the train. No sickness, but slight symptoms of disturbance of digestion.

1. ix. 13. Journey from Edinburgh to Moffat. Slept most of the way. Had to be roused for bottle. No bad effects.

29. ix. 13. Uneventful journey from Moffat to Edinburgh.

4. x. 13. Journey from Edinburgh to Manchester. Some resistance to sleep, but no other trouble.

In the spring of 1914 there were two journeys between Edinburgh and Manchester, but nothing special is recorded of either.

In summer she travelled well from Manchester to Rhos, in North Wales. The return journey she enjoyed, except for a long tunnel, which caused her to cry.

18. xii. 14. Journey from Manchester to Edinburgh. No event recorded. On the return journey baby was a little fretful during the first part, but was more content after she had her dinner.

In spring, 1915, she made this long journey twice more ; in neither case was there any untoward event.

At this time a new nurse came to her who is a bad traveller, so that before the next journey the child may have chanced to hear references to the discomforts of travelling.

However that may be, on the next journey to Edinburgh in summer (1915) she was very sick in the train, but " very jolly on arrival."

A fortnight later she accomplished the journey to Moffat quite successfully, and a few weeks afterwards she completed the return journey to Manchester with no trouble.

21. xii. 15. Uneventful journey from Manchester to Edinburgh. On the return journey the child was fretful for the first half of the way. After a short sleep, from which she was wakened by the train stopping, she asked for something to eat, but did not take much. She enjoyed a drink of water, but was still fretful and said she wasn't well. By and by she sat up and had some more water.

Then she said she was "a little well." Gradually she cheered up and was quite lively during the last part of the way. She had practically nothing to eat on the journey, but took a satisfactory tea on arrival, and was as jolly as possible afterwards.

Here we see Margaret developing into the kind of person that can never eat in trains.

She had no journey now till summer (1916), when she came from Manchester to Newton Stewart. I have recorded that she arrived as sweet tempered as usual, though obviously tired and sleepy. Unfortunately I have not noted whether she ate anything on the way, but by this time she had acquired a reputation for not being able to eat mince sandwiches, though she was very fond of mince. So it is very likely there was some difficulty about eating on the journey.

On the return to Manchester a fortnight's stay was made at Dumfries, the journey to which was accomplished easily. The family faith that she would be all right on a short journey probably had its effect. When she completed the journey to Manchester her nurse, who had been on holiday, joined the train, and it is not impossible that thus the idea of sickness was brought up again. She ate very little—a bite at one o'clock, and another with a little water at four. Soon after the latter she was sick. She did not turn white or seem uncomfortable. Her father happened not to be in the compartment at the interesting moment. As soon as he returned, she announced, "I've been sick, father." She was made to lie down. She wanted to know if big people went to bed if they were sick. She evidently wanted to do everything that was correct in the circumstances.

At Christmas the child again travelled to Edinburgh. My impression is that there was sickness, but I have no note of it. On the return journey she became miserable very soon. She kept saying, "I feel like it, mother, I feel

like it." Distraction was tried with some success at first, but in the end was unavailing. A change at Preston provided some more successful distraction, and after that the child bore up pretty well. But fear of travelling was probably imprinted on both mother and child.

Nevertheless the next long train journey in June, 1917, appears to have been successful. Probably the helpful suggestion that children grow out of this kind of thing was skilfully applied. Moreover her intelligence was increasing, and she was much interested in all she saw. Indeed, she chattered so continuously on the journey that a strange gentleman was driven into inquiring of her, " Do you *never* speak ? " The return journey to Manchester, and one soon afterwards to London, gave no trouble, though I think her practice was still to eat little—chiefly biscuits.

In July, 1918, there was a very long much delayed journey from Manchester to Edinburgh, in which there was, I think, some sickness towards the end. But the child looked quite bright on arrival, and had asked many questions on the way.

On the return journey there was again a break at Moffat. In going from Moffat to Manchester she seemed " fairly content doing nothing." Her mother wrote that she starved all the way " as usual." She feared she felt more or less squeamish in the train.

18. xii. 18. Journey from Manchester to Edinburgh. Uneventful.

In the spring of 1919 she made the journey with neither sickness nor refusal of food. On the return she was " splendid all the way," very anxious to look out of the window.

In summer the child travelled to and from Ireland and also to the Perthshire Highlands and back ; so I think we may consider she has escaped from her trouble. But it might very easily have been established as a habit.

Fuss and fear tend to establish such habits. They act

on the child as suggestions, and bring about what they would fain prevent. A nonchalant manner, a conviction, not too much insisted on but quite unshakable, that the undesirable habit will die out as the child grows older and more sensible, will bring about its disappearance.

As a little girl, Margaret did fuss about some necessary activities, finding them impossible. One day Jean—one of her many selves—said to me, "Margaret always says she can't do this." "Oh!" I said in an offhand way, "Margaret's still a silly little thing at times, but she'll soon have more sense." Jean quite agreed with me, and I believe the prophecy brought its own fulfilment.

If suggestion can do so much in the way of directing the organism towards health or disease, we need not be surprised to find that it is of immense avail in the formation of the intellect and the building of the character. A great many people never do half what they might, because they discount their success beforehand by administering to themselves suggestions of failure. In their school days they set to work on their tasks—translations, geometrical problems, what you will—convinced that they will not be able to bring them to a satisfactory end. In later life they carry on more or less successfully, often demonstrating to every one's satisfaction but their own that they are possessed of excellent intellects. But the spectre of failure still dogs them, and with imperious finger points the lower path.

The chief art of the teacher should be not so much to teach as to inspire the learner with confidence in his own ability to learn. At present it is not by any means necessarily those who have the best intellects who come to the front. It is those who have courage, confidence in their own powers, that impress themselves on others, and for good or for ill become the leaders of men.

As with intellect, so with character. The good child is the child of whom it is taken for granted that he is good.

The question, "Where is my helpful boy?" or "Where is my sunshine girl?" will actually promote the growth of the virtues referred to; just as such remarks—all too frequently heard—as "You're a bad boy, always in mischief," will also produce their appropriate fruit.

Experimentation. The last of the general instinct tendencies is experimentation. This appears towards the end of the first year, but is more marked in the second and third. We very frequently call it Mischief, but that is because we look at it through adult spectacles. It is a tendency of the utmost importance for the advancement of knowledge, being indeed the foundation of all scientific inquiry.

Experimentation is not simply an undirected pushing about of material objects. It is a definite question put to Nature with the intention of obtaining an answer. Baby's concentrated attention indicates his intelligent purpose.

A few concrete examples will show how well the child's procedure often accords with the canons of scientific method.

In her second year Patricia found a pleasing noise could be made by hammering the bed rails with a glass bottle. She proceeded to try whether other things would give an equally satisfactory sound. Experiments with noises are very common.

When she was four Margaret came to me with shining eyes to announce that there was green juice inside nasturtium stalks. I found she had been expressing this juice on the paving stones and trying to draw therewith.

Fire seems to tempt nearly all children to experiment. One little girl applied a lighted match to the back of a maid's dress, and after a few seconds' observation remarked, "Why, it's burning."

"When I was a child," writes one of my students, "I was very eager to know the difference between coal when it was in the coal scuttle and when it was in the grate.

One day, when mother went out and I was alone for a minute or so, I lifted a piece of coal from the scuttle and looked at it and examined it. Then I put my hand into the grate and lifted a piece of burning coal, but I can assure you I soon let it fall. I burnt my fingers, and for a long time after that I could not bear the sight of coal."

Experimentation readily allies itself with curiosity. It may degenerate into meddlesomeness, and may be destructive as well as constructive. Into a child endowed with a strong tendency to experiment it is well to instil early a respect for other people's property.

With regard to the general instinct tendencies, the question may be raised whether there is any difference between the two sexes. Boys certainly seem to have a greater tendency to experimentation, while girls, perhaps, are more sympathetic. If these or other differences actually exist, however, they may be the result of social pressure rather than of native endowment. It is surprising how soon society begins to push the girl baby into the girlish mould and the boy baby into the boyish mould. The very presents given to them are different and calculated to cause them to develop differently. The girl who attempts to play with boys' toys, or the boy who attempts to play with girls' toys, has to face a considerable amount of social disapproval and actual difficulty. One hears of many little boys who like to play with dolls ; but only a boy of exceptional independence and strength of mind could possibly continue to play with them after he had left infancy behind. He may lavish his affection on a wooden horse or a Jumbo, but he must not show any tenderness to his sister's babies. Similarly such things as Meccano, railways, clockwork toys generally, chemicals, etc., are reserved for boys, and a little girl who loves those things is thought to be deserting her proper sphere. On the whole it seems to me probable that no congenital sexual difference exists ; and this conclusion accords with the

finding of many present-day psychologists who maintain that while there may be a masculine type and a feminine type, yet many normal men belong to the latter, while many normal women belong to the former.

CHAPTER V

GAMES

Little children usually love games, and their way of playing them is very interesting, and to the psychologist very instructive.

Hide and Seek is, I think, the game that makes the earliest appeal. It comes first as Peep-bo, which babies play with glee. At eight months Margaret started the game for the first time on her own initiative. She twice held a silk handkerchief in front of her face, and then pulled it down again.

But it was from the time she was three that Hide and Seek in various forms became a great interest to her.

She had become acquainted with cards when I was teaching numbers to Mary. One day when we were in the country she asked to play with the cards. I found she was taking a greater interest in the " ladies and gentlemen " than in the numbers. So we constructed some games with them. I gave her, e.g. the Queen of Spades. Then we agreed we would look for the King. I showed her each one, asking, " Is this the King of Spades ? " She was pretty successful, but of course mixed King and Knave. When we were examining them to see what the difference was, she spontaneously said of the King, " He has an old face."

Another game was to show the child the Queen of Hearts, then mix it in among the others, and show all in succession, asking each time, " Is this the Queen of Hearts ? " Three or four times the Queen was not recognized, though each time I made my little companion take a good look at the

picture, pointing out the features to be specially noted. From a very early age Margaret has been rather inclined to find consolation in something else, if success did not attend what she was doing. So each time she failed, I pretended the Queen thought it great fun to escape. Then we took the King. Him she recognized first shot; but she wanted to know if he would not think it great fun to escape. I had to admit that he probably would. "Then let him escape," she said. In spite of this, the next three times she could not forbear to recognize him when he came; the fourth time only did she succeed in letting him go by without comment.

A few days later the child asked to be allowed to play with "the ladies" again. I showed her the Knave of Diamonds. Then he went hiding among the rest, and I held them up one by one. When we came to the Knave she evidently recognized him, smiled, made an effort, seized him, threw him on the sofa where I had put the other rejected ones, and exclaimed, "Let him escape."

A few days later she was able to let the selected card escape with a perfectly composed face, and no sign of recognition. This incident is interesting as showing how gradually a child acquires the power of inhibiting action.

Margaret was one of those children, not uncommon I believe, who consider that they are hidden when they conceal their face. I have seen her stand in full view and simply pull her hat over her face. I remember her hiding a doll in the same way by turning its face against the wall. When I, who thought this a very silly way of hiding it, found it, she persistently urged upon me, "But you couldn't see its face." There seemed to be some deep meaning apparent to the child which I could not see. I should not be at all surprised to learn that some such notion as this is common in savage tribes.

When Margaret was four, a walk was a very poor thing

if she might not run on in front, and half conceal herself in slight recesses. Then her companions had to say, "Where is that baby?" when she would come forward laughing with glee. For her this game never lost its freshness, but I do not know when she learned to play it properly, I mean really concealing herself.

When she was four and a quarter she hid herself in a corner, putting a waste-paper basket over her face. I began "Where is she?" "I'm looking at you through holes," she said. I then searched under a cane chair, saying, "Is she here?" "No, I'm here," she announced.

The automatism of little children is an important factor in the way they play games.[1] I have tried "Hide the thimble in a place you can see it," at the Free Kindergarten. The children there behaved just as Margaret did. Their tendency was to hide the thimble in the same place time after time. Also they tended to look in that place, and if it wasn't there they were quite at a loss.

Doubtless Margaret would have made quicker progress in games had there been older children for her to play with. After playing with other children she generally showed signs of having come to a better understanding of the game. As usual I was much more concerned to see what her point of view was than to hurry her to a more advanced plane.

One day her mother was playing with her and hid an acorn in her shoe. When it was Margaret's turn to do the hiding she told her mother to shut her eyes, and then said, "If I hide it in some person's shoe, I won't hide it in the same person's shoe." This seems to mark an advance.

When she was four and a half, there was decided improvement, though she still chose very obvious places and kept looking at them. We tried to use the "Hot" and "Cold" method of guidance, but it was difficult to make her understand. When told her right hand was "hot,"

[1] Cf. Chapter X.

instead of moving towards the right she would look at her hand.

Even when she was four and three-quarters, she once hid the thimble on her own finger and held it up in a most conspicuous position, so that I saw it the moment I opened my eyes. This immediate finding, however, never damped her joy in the game.

Instead of really hiding the object her mother sometimes just thinks of a place to put it ; but while she is thinking, Margaret runs to the sofa and hides her eyes.

Follow my Leader is a good game for tiny people, and gives much pleasure. Before she was four Margaret tried it with a little friend, but played badly, not following, nor imitating the actions. A few days later she played it with me, and showed great improvement. She was delighted with some of the actions introduced, e.g. knee bending. We were telling her nurse about it later. Evidently the child had not caught the name properly, for she said in a puzzled way, " But which was the hider ? "

Follow my Leader remains a favourite game up to the present day. When there is only one child, there is some danger of that child always having the choice of parts. One day Margaret begged me to play the Leader game with her. I said, " All right, I'll be leader." " No, me." " No, me." " Oh, no, me." " Oh, no, me." " All right." So I was leader first, and she waited for her turn.

I think Follow my Leader might have come with advantage earlier than it did. It seems to belong to the stage at which children are beginning to imitate. It might probably be made a helpful game then.

When four and a quarter Margaret turned a little Pomeranian dog that came to see us into a Leader. She was always rather afraid of dogs, but made gallant efforts to mask her fear. We all went for a walk, including Paddy the Pom. Margaret was wildly excited, wanting to run

with him, but dashing away if he came near her. "I must do everything he do's," she said. Children always accept animals as being on the same plane with themselves.

Simple card games are good for little ones. They help them to realize number, and give practice in comparison and judgment. Margaret was just four when we began to play Grab with her. She was not very sure when she might grab, but was very gleeful over the game, laughing aloud when she or others grabbed. Very soon after, she learned Old Maid, to which she took kindly.

I know of a little girl of six who plays Whist and Patience, but neither of these have I yet tried with Margaret.

Dominoes can be introduced about the same time, and is also a good game from the point of view of number.[1]

These games might with advantage be introduced into the schools. Little ones of five would learn number far more rapidly if they had the game interest to help them. If it were not thought advisable to introduce ordinary playing cards into the class room, it would be quite simple to make cards with different numbers of spots on them, which would be equally suitable. The children could play in little groups, the slower children being distributed in such a way that they could learn from their brighter companions.

If children are let alone mere babies show themselves capable of finding a place in a game.

When Margaret was about two and a half my little friend Mary, aged eight, was coming to me for special lessons in number. Margaret took a very great interest in Mary and used to insist on being present at the lessons. At this time she herself could name one, two, and three spots at a glance, and had the lessons continued she would soon have known four and five.

One morning I entered the room where the lesson was to be given, and found the two children seated at the table.

[1] See my *Psychology and Teaching of Number* (Harrap).

Baby was turning over the cards one by one as she had seen me do, and as she placed each in front of Mary she said, "How many are there?" The funniest part was the gravity with which Mary was responding.

Bright children would soon invent games for themselves. Margaret's first invention came when she was not quite four years of age. "I'll show you a game," she said. "I'll show you what we'll play." She then put three pieces of paper on the floor, threw her ball over, and then ran after it, stepping over the paper.

When she was four and a quarter I have recorded that she was very fond of inventing games, but few of them had much point. When she was painting one day, she began, "The game is to paint different things, and if you paint the same thing the light is cross. I'll tell you the game, you see I must try and draw on a paper like that, try and make a hole with the thing. I'll play a game with this. I have to be talking all the time I'm playing this game. I have to say all sorts of things. Bey, vey, bey. Oh, do try and make a hole——" then more gibberish.

New words were sometimes invented. She came to me one day with "Let's have an alacon with one another." "What's that?" "Oh, a p'etend. I'll p'etend I see something." Another similar proposal was, "Let's have a doodle with one another."

I shouldn't be at all surprised if the child thought she might hit upon real words. One day she brought me a hieroglyphic on paper with the question, "What's that figure, if it's a figure at all?"

Identifying people's voices is quite a good game. One day Margaret (four) mistook my voice for her mother's. This suggested the game to me, and I said we might play it, if her mother had been in the room. Of course she wanted to play it there and then. As we were the only people in the room, I could not see any possibility of playing. However she persisted, and I let her have her will.

She went to the sofa and hid her face. I spoke. She guessed all the people she could think of, including Father Bear, before she said my name. The game thus played appeared to afford her great satisfaction.

Word Games. Word games are very enjoyable and should be begun early. It does not much matter if the child does not see the point of them at first—at least what we consider the point. If he enjoys them, let us, instead of trying to force our view upon him, try to get at his. We must, as always, beware we do not laugh at the funny misunderstandings that arise. Children's progress is stopped and their confidence sapped more often than we think by the laughter of people who have not sufficient insight to see the essential reasonableness of the child's attitude.

Naming all the things you can see or can think of is quite a good game, and I am sorry I did not try it with Margaret when she was small.

When she wanted two months of three years, I tried the game of opposites in this wise : " Baby, I say short. What do you say ? " Of course she hadn't the slightest idea. So I continued, " You say long. I say big. What do you say ? " She had not yet caught the idea, so her mother said " Little." " Now, Baby, I say short. What do you say ? " B. " Long." " I say black. What do you say ? " B. " White." She gave in this way " Naughty " when I said " Good." When I said " Light " she did not get Dark, nor did we give it to her ; I went back over the old examples, and after one or two I said " Dark," she then gave " Light." Then I said " Tall " ; she said " Not tall." She also gave " Not laugh " in response to " laugh."

I don't think many children under three could play this game, for it involves a certain realization of the abstract idea of contrast. Margaret was probably helped in playing it by a habit she had of saying the same thing from opposite

points of view. For example, just about this time she had invented a form of word play which we did not like. She would say "Yaas" for Yes. Once I said "Don't! Baby! good little girls don't say Yaas." "Only naughty girls say Yaas," said she, "good litty girls say Yes."

Three months later, for a time she developed a play in which she contradicted everything that was said to her. I would perhaps say, "Isn't the river nice." Baby. "No, I don't think it nice; I think it nasty." "Don't you like this place?" "No, I don't like this place." This was not a very agreeable game, and it was encouraged to die out. I don't know whether the two things were connected.

How, When and Where. At about the age of three Margaret was introduced to How do you like it? When do you like it? Where do you like it? This is an excellent game, for it leads to the recognition of Adverbs of Manner, Place and Time. The child did not of course play it properly, but she delighted in it, and took great pleasure in thinking of things. In a "letter" sent to me six months later she said, "I've played When and Where, and When and Where."

When she was a little over four, her answers on one occasion to the three questions were "Blue," "At ten o'clock," "In my dolly's pram," showing that she grasped the nature of the questions.

Naming all the animals you can think of, all the flowers, all the vegetables, all the people, all the pieces of furniture, are pleasant and instructive games. There is an endless variety of them. They can be played and enjoyed by people of all ages. I once knew an old lady over eighty who used to wile away the watches of the night by ingenious modifications of these games. When one plays such games with little children one has to exercise care not to be too clever and yet to keep the game going.

Twenty questions is another excellent game, teaching logical Division and Classification as well as Number.

One player thinks of something and the others are allowed twenty questions to find what it is. Questions can be answered only by Yes or No. This rule in itself is a very valuable means of teaching the children to focus a question. For example, I have thought of something. "Where have you seen it?" my companion asks. "Yes," I say, and one of her precious questions has gone with no result.

Again I have thought of something. "Is it the chair?" "Is it the table?" "Is it the curtain?" This is the spendthrift manner. The twenty questions soon go, and my secret is still my own.

Margaret thinks of something. "Is it in this room?" "Do you see it just now?" "Is it on that table?" "Is it that flower?"

The great effectiveness of the one method, as compared with the other, soon becomes apparent to the child, and classification is begun.

The child's thought is nearly always determined by the environment, or by the thought of the other player. This is often amusingly apparent in the next game.

Personifications. This game is a little more difficult, as it involves a more advanced form of composition. One player imagines herself a person, and describes herself, continuing until the other players guess. The successful player then of course takes the leading part. It is clear that the more one knows, the more interesting and ingenious this game might become. Quite little children can enjoy it, if their companions will respect and allow for their way of playing it.

Margaret enjoyed it greatly before she was five, but the babyish characteristics referred to above came out very strongly. For instance, once I was Cinderella; and immediately after *she* was Cinderella. A day or two later, when we were out, she proposed to play at being people. She began, "I have two cruel sisters who push me and put me in the corner when I am good." One day she was a

tortoise, but misled me altogether by talking about her fur.

Some time ago we played the game after a long interval. I was Red Riding Hood. Immediately afterwards Margaret was the Wolf; and the fact that I could not guess who she was for quite a long time illustrates in an interesting way the difference between an adult's mode of thought and a child's. The close association which made her choose Wolf made me avoid him.

Spelling Games. As soon as a child begins to be interested in sounds one can play the game of finding as many words as possible beginning with a particular letter, or having a particular letter somewhere in them.

In her fifth year Margaret devoted a considerable amount of attention to sounds. One day, as we went along the road, she noticed M I L K on a van, and read it. We began to try to find other words beginning with M. "I'll tell you one beginning with R," she said, after a little. "T-r-r-r-ee."

During the next week or two Margaret would at times give the conversation a turn in the direction of sounds and letters. She did this one day at breakfast time, and somehow we found ourselves—I mean the adults of the party—saying words beginning with ch. At first Margaret made no contribution, and I was just beginning to think we were out of her depth, when she suddenly produced "chimney."

I left about that time, and her mother reported that spelling fell rather into the background. But the possibilities of the game are clear. Some six months later we produced a box of letters for the child, and she took pleasure in playing the ordinary spelling game.

My friend Miss MacKenzie, Directress of the Montessori School in Moray House, finds that the little ones she is teaching take the same pleasure in analysing the sounds contained in spoken words that Margaret did. This very important fact escapes the notice of the ordinary teacher,

or perhaps it would be more correct to say that the ordinary system of teaching prevents the tendency from showing itself. We have in it, I consider, the natural basis for the teaching of spelling and pronunciation.

Lotto. This game has long been a favourite with children. It is one of those games that might be useful at every stage, for it admits of very fine grading.

Each player receives a card with several pictures on it. Similar pictures are provided on separate cards. One player takes these pictures singly from a bag where they are loosely mixed, and names each one. Whoever has the one named must claim the card, and place it on his duplicate of the picture. Whoever has covered his large card first has won the game. If no one claims a picture, it should be put back in the bag and drawn again.

The element of competition in the game does not appeal to little children; sufficient for them is the effort to fill their card; they are just as much interested in other people's cards as in their own. In this, as in other things, one is responsive to their attitude; there is much to be said for not urging on the competitive spirit in life.

Instead of having duplicate pictures the names may be printed on the small cards. This, however, prevents children who cannot read playing the game by themselves. The best plan is probably to have both picture and name on the small cards.

At first the pictures should be of common objects, most of which are known to the children. Gradually as their experience widens other forms may be developed. Several varieties of Zoological Lotto, for example, I have at various times found in the shops, and Flower Lotto, Shell Lotto, and many other variations could be used with advantage.

The game often brings out in a remarkable way the facility with which children learn words. I once took Zoological Lotto as a present to a three-year-old friend. I did it with some hesitation, for the names given seemed

to me so very difficult for her baby lips. I played the game with her in the morning, and she was delighted with it. In the evening she exhibited it to her father. "What's that?" she said, pointing. "It's a spider." "No," responded baby triumphantly, "it's a rhinoceros. What's that?" "A mouse." "No, an ornithorhynchus."

I tried the game with Margaret for the first time when she was two and a half. She did not understand it at all, not even grasping the fact that the pictures were to go above their duplicates. But after I desisted, she possessed herself of the bag containing the little pictures, pulled them out one by one, and said, "Has anybody dot zis?" in close imitation of my manner. Had other children been available the plan would have been to let baby have the part she had chosen, and show the pictures; I make no doubt in such circumstances she would soon have learned the game.

Rhyme. By and by the making of rhymes comes to be regarded as a pleasant pastime.

I do not know when the appreciation of rhyme is first found. Margaret seemed to me in this matter rather slow, still, to find three rhymes for a given word in one minute is, according to the Binet Scale (Stamford Revision), a suitable test for a nine-year-old child, so perhaps I have no great reason to complain.

Margaret heard the usual nursery rhymes in her babyhood, but possibly not so often as many children hear them.

When she was four and a quarter I began to try to teach her what a rhyme was, but she could not get the idea. The "poetries" that she made had neither rhyme nor rhythm.

Three months later, when I was with her again, in the course of her chatter she hit on the phrase, "fish in a dish." "That is poetry," she said, "*fish* and *dish* rhyme." I asked for a rhyme to day, but she wandered off into spelling. A moment later, after I had told her "may"

rhymed with " day," she said, " To-morrow will be may to-day. That's poetry," she added. I pointed out it wasn't sense, and it was better to have both. Her mother thinks she had been told that " fish " and " dish " rhyme. So far she had never succeeded in supplying a rhyme.

A day or two later the question of rhyme was brought up again by the child inquiring if " fishter " and " dishter " were poetry.

Soon after that she said, with reference to the coming of a friend, " 'Bus 28 goes to Notting Hill gate." I pointed out this was a rhyme. There followed some more conversation, in course of which the child asked for rhymes for " hill." I suggested several, and as an example, I said, " I sat on the hill eating a pill." Then my little companion produced with great triumph, " I walked down the hill with pills in my pocket."

The matter now rested, so far as I was concerned ; but about ten days after I left I received a " poetry " from her, " There was a little girl, and she had a clock, and it talked."

When I next visited her some three months later, Margaret gave me this " poetry " : " *He* had a little *she*."

A few days later she gave me *blue* and *glue*, and *boot* and *fruit*, as rhymes, but she did not seem able to grasp the fact that in making a " poetry " you must put your rhyme at the end of the line. When I said to her, " You must put your rhyme at the end of the line," she proclaimed that I had made a rhyme, showing her ear was not yet true.

No more was done, I think, till Christmas, by which time she was five and a half. We then taught her rhyming charades, but her suggestions were few. However, a few days later I put the Binet tests to her ; when I asked for a rhyme for *day*, she gave *nay*, *bay*, *hay*, within a minute ; in response to *mill* she gave *bill*, *till*, *gill*, *will*, *pill*, *ill*, in twenty-five seconds ; in response to *spring* she gave *ding*, *king*, *ging*, *wing*, *fling*.

She seemed thus to have grasped the idea ; yet three months later, when we played rhyming charades, she gave *bane* as the rhyme for the word she had thought of. I tried a great number of words ; finally she had to tell me. It was *basin* !

Language games require at least two players. Before children advance to this stage they have to make their own games, and they do not require any companion.

Patricia I consider an adept in the art of constructing baby games. A game must have an object, and it must be a little difficult. As soon as you can achieve the object easily and unfailingly the fun ceases. When you are very young it is a good game to try to manage your hands. They grasp readily, but they will not so readily let go. Grown-up people often think you refuse to give them things, when the truth of the matter is your hands won't relax. When Patricia was about ten months it was an evident pleasure to her to give grandpapa his newspaper, as she could let go at the right moment. An interesting game is to try to hold one thing in each hand at the same time ; next one tries to hold two things in one hand. Then one sits on the floor, having first possessed oneself of two objects, one in each hand, and tries to find out how to interchange them. Patricia taught me this game. She used to play it with great intentness. Her method was to lay one object on the floor in front of her, then place the other beside it, next pick up the first object with the second hand and the second object with the first hand. This is a good game, presenting considerable difficulty. One has to use one's eyes to direct one's hand, and one has to contract and relax at appropriate moments arm, finger, and body muscles. If the objects you use are balls, you have to be careful in putting them down, as they are surprisingly mobile ; cubes are more reliable.

Variations of this game are lifting a number of things from one spot to another, and taking many pieces of paper

one by one out of the wastepaper basket and laying them on a chair. The ability to creep or walk increases the possibilities of this game.

Patricia was most ingenious in the way she would adapt the rules of her games to her increasing powers. She was very fond of pulling out certain little drawers of mine, which were near the floor, and pushing them in again. At first she sat on the ground. Suddenly she added the rule that when you pulled out the drawers you must stand up and stoop down.

To climb upstairs all by herself was a joyous feat. One day I heard her whimpering on the steps. I went to see what was the matter, and found that the game now was not simply to climb, but to carry with you a number of cards. Some of these had escaped from her hand and she was in doubt whether she should gather them together again or convey a few at a time to the top. I placed myself below her. In the course of her efforts she rose to her feet on one of the steps and suddenly sat down backwards—fortunately into my outstretched hands.

To stand on two little feet right in the middle of the floor, and at the same time wave your hand ; to walk along and at the same time make sounds ; these are excellent games at a certain stage, the fun being that you never know when you may suddenly lose your balance and find yourself sitting on the floor.

When Patricia was about sixteen months and trotting about not too steadily, I gave her four little coloured balls, of perhaps an inch and a half diameter. She soon began to devise games. She tried if one would stand on the top of the other, as her cubes did. She tried if she could walk about holding two in each hand. Then three in one hand and one in the other. Then she put this challenge to herself, Rise to your feet, holding two balls in each hand !

Patricia is now eighteen months. She can build ten cubes (edge about an inch) into a tower. Sometimes she

attempts this standing so that she has to preserve her balance at the same time. On other occasions she will attempt to build the tower on the table, which is just about the height of her mouth, so that the task is not an easy one. When you go to school, Patricia, will you ask to have your path made smooth before you, or like a little problem lover I have heard of, will you say, "The difficulter, the interestinger"?

CHAPTER VI

IMAGINATION—I

NOWADAYS Mr. Gradgrind has no followers. No one now ventures to talk of education as a process of imparting facts to those ignorant of them. The training of the imagination is universally regarded as a duty incumbent upon teachers because of its supreme importance. This is as it should be. It is imagination which enables us to pass the bounds of our own narrow experience, to enter into the lives of others, to sympathize with their difficulties, and so to render help. It is imagination which renders it possible for us to be worthy citizens of our far-flung Empire. It is imagination that enables us to escape at will from this workaday world, to wander in moonlit glades with Titania and Oberon, or with the knights of olden days go riding down to Camelot. It is want of imagination, or rather perhaps want of the right direction of imagination, that allows so much remediable squalor, degradation, and poverty to exist in our so-called centres of civilization.

If we think over the various mental activities which we refer to as imaginative we shall see at once that they are of very different values. Some are inspiring, some are enervating: some lead to the Mount of Vision, others to a bog of confusion and error. For example, at the present time many people of considerable imaginative capacity can see nothing but hardship in the work of the hewer of wood and the drawer of water. They realize vividly in their own bodies the aching limbs and the leaden brain

that would be theirs had they to spend their days in the mine or the factory. They cannot conceive that a scavenger or a cabdriver may be a happy and contented man. If such exists, they are inclined to say, "So much the worse for him."

The imaginative activities associated with the realm of romance may very easily come to bulk so largely in an individual's mental life that he is swept away from the real world altogether, and his mental energy prevented from playing any worthy part in life. I must not be understood as meaning that this is necessarily the tendency of romance. It is, however, a danger against which we must be on our guard.

To be of value, imagination must be in vital contact with reality. It may either present to us reality in such a way that it adds to our knowledge and experience in realms where direct experience is impossible to us, or it may open our eyes to a higher form of reality than at present exists—a form which is not yet real in fact, but which may so become. This is *par excellence* creative imagination. Neither of these modes of imaginative activity must be allowed to rest in itself. Its value consists in its effect on conduct. It finds its justification in its power to render us more efficient members of society. There may also be an imaginative activity which is purely recreative and enjoyable, and which seems almost or quite divorced from reality, such, for example, as we experience in reading Lewis Carroll's immortal works. Yet the test of value is still in the effect on conduct. Joy is a mental tonic, and community in wholesome laughter is a binding social force. But if indulgence in such reading or such romancing comes to react in an unfavourable way on our practical life, then it is to be regarded as a temptation from which we must seek deliverance.

Imagination works on different mental levels. In giving children descriptive lessons in geography we try to make

them realize, by a rearrangement of their sense experience, the configuration and conditions obtaining in other countries than their own. If we are describing Holland to them and wish to make them realize the canals, we call to their minds any canal they have actually seen, or in default of that we may use a river which belongs to their environment, and then we appeal to the imagination to make what modifications are required. To this call the imagination can respond only if memory supplies the necessary material, that is, if this material has already played a part in the sense experience of the individual. A child who has never seen a daisy cannot realize the lines,

> " Her feet have touched the meadows
> And left the daisies rosy."

Here imagination is working on the sense level. Much of our school work in geography, nature study, history, literature moves on this level. It is really a form of memory, but the mental activity breaks up the memory material, selects what is required, forms new combinations, and so may build up pictures different from anything that has come into the visual experience of the percipient. People vary greatly in the freedom with which they can break up and recombine the treasures of their memory. In reading a descriptive poem, for example, many people will see pictures of actual scenes which they recognize and can name, while others see pictures which are new to them—which they have created for the occasion. Much of our enjoyment of literature depends on the power possessed by the writer's words to evoke suitable sense images in our minds. To this level of the imagination belongs " all the wondrous world of eye and ear " as it exists within the mind.

It is a legitimate aim of education to store the mind with an infinite number of images so that words may come to have a rich content.

In this process pictures are a powerful instrument. The child begins to interpret and to appreciate pictures at a surprisingly early age. Many mothers have been impressed by the way in which baby succeeds in picking out his father's face in a group photograph, and at the readiness with which he will recognize very sketchy drawings of objects with which he is familiar.

The fact that pictures are to the child in many ways as good as objects ought to be taken advantage of much more than it is.

At a pond near Edinburgh where there are a large number of aquatic birds a dispute one day arose between two men as to the name of a certain bird. A nursemaid standing by pointed to a little chap of about four, saying, "Ask Davie; he'll know." The advice was taken, and the child without hesitation named the bird. The explanation was that the child's father was deeply interested in birds, and had a splendid collection of pictures bearing on this hobby. The boy from the age of about two had been accustomed to having a card portraying a bird before him at meal times, because it was found that thus he took his food better. In this way he had become familiar with the appearance and name of a great number of our British birds.

In the nursery we might lay the foundations of all the natural sciences by a judicious use of pictures. The interest thus created, the knowledge thus acquired would do much to stimulate a more profound study of the material later.

Teachers of young children should make collections of suitable pictures, and render them available for the children. The pictures should be mounted on cards and should be simple, concentrating the attention on one thing. Many of the present-day advertisements would serve the purpose. Some few of the innumerable picture post cards now issued, notably some of the animal and bird

series, would be useful. The pictures should be kept in envelopes, each envelope containing perhaps half a dozen, and the children should be encouraged to take them for individual study. Duplicate sets should be provided, as various games will then be possible. One game in which little children will delight is a simple pairing of the cards. One set may be arranged on the table in a line ; and then the second set placed below in the same order. Another game may be played by one child drawing a card and holding it up for the others to name. He who says the correct name first will then have the privilege of drawing a card.

Most of us in our youth have played Families, and have kindly memories of Mr. Chips the Carpenter, of Mrs. Chips his wife, and of their hopeful progeny, as well as of all the other notable people who appear in these most inartistic cards. A similar game might well be introduced which would leave an impression of more real value than that made by the worthies above mentioned. For example, a three-fold set of cards showing 1, a bird ; 2, its nest ; 3, its egg, would sharpen the eyes of the children, and add to their pleasure whenever they visited the country. A similar game might be made which should show 1, a tree or plant ; 2, its flower ; 3, its leaf ; 4, its fruit. A wide field here is open for an artistic and ingenious teacher. The possibilities of educational picture games have been as yet little realized.

Some stimulus is necessary to make a child look properly at pictures, or even at things. I was once playing at animal personations with a child of five. " I have four legs," she said, " all the same length . . ." She then hesitated and said, " If I tell you what my beast is, will you forget ? " She then came close to me and whispered, " Have bears got hoofs ? " Now this child had been long familiar with the Three Bears in illustrations ; she had seen real bears in the Edinburgh and in the London Zoo, and yet

she could be in doubt with respect to such an important point as this.

When I was a student at a training college, we used to give object lessons. Lessons of the type denoted by this term have now fallen into discredit; no doubt they were often inane and wearisome performances, yet in their origin they were animated by this psychological truth—that we do not really perceive a thing as it is unless we definitely analyse it and concentrate attention on the several parts.

There is a story of a teacher who was giving a lesson on a cat to an infant class. "How many legs has pussy?" she asked; "and how many ears?" and so on. At last one little chap burst out, "Poor teacher, have you never seen a cat?"

I do not vouch for the truth of this story, but my present point is that the child's implied criticism was wrong. I, for example, have often seen a lobster, yet any expert could easily ask me questions about the details of its appearance which I could not answer. If, however, I were interested and my curiosity aroused by his questions, I should probably look more particularly at a lobster the next time I got the chance. I might even exert myself and make an opportunity to examine the creature now that I had certain questions in my mind to act as a guide to observation.

Once upon a time a youth went to study under a great naturalist. The teacher left him alone in a room where there was a case containing a preserved fish. "Look at that," he said, "and I will come and speak to you about it by and by." The lad thought this a strange mode of treatment. He soon tired of the fish and wandered about the room looking out of the window, at the clock, at anything that took his fancy. After about an hour the naturalist returned and asked if he had looked at the fish. Rather huffily he replied that he had. "Then,"

said his teacher, "no doubt you can tell me how many rays there are in the tail and fins, the shape and arrangement of the scales, the position of the eyes, the curves of the gills, the markings of the mouth," and so forth. Of course he could do nothing of the kind. So he was told to look at the fish again and again, and he would have become disheartened at his ill success and disgusted with the whole business had not his master dropped the hint, "*Your pencil will open your eyes.*"

This hint is worth remembering. Drawing gives the child a purpose which he readily adopts as his own. By this means we obtain self-directed observation and spontaneous discoveries. The knowledge that the child thus gains becomes a part of himself.

Object lessons fell into discredit largely, I think, because they were felt to be unrelated to the general scheme of the child's education. They appeared to be isolated incidents not linked on to anything else. Yet we must remember that in education the only important unity is the unity which exists in the child's mind—the unity which he forms for himself. The most logical educational system may fall all to pieces, may lose all its interconnection and most of its meaning as it is assimilated by an individual child; whereas the most haphazard system which seems to be built up by chance rather than by thought may be unified by the child and welded so as to serve his living purpose. Much of the scorn that was poured upon object lessons was thoroughly deserved from the point of view of logic. I am not so sure that this was the case, if we adopt the psychological standpoint: and, after all, in education we must take our stand with psychology rather than with logic.

In teaching we are too apt to think of our lesson or series of lessons as a thing complete in itself. This is not as it should be. The function of a lesson is not so much to inform the child as to magnetize him, to create in him

sensitive spots which will respond and draw to themselves material in his environment. A child should be learning all the time, and "lessons" should to a large extent determine what he learns.

You have given a lesson on India—a very imperfect lesson, you know, yet you cannot feel it was altogether a failure when you remember the shining faces round.

Next morning John, one of your pupils, sees on the breakfast table a foreign letter. "Why! this is from *India!*" he says. "Why has the stamp got our King's head on it?"

"A shocking lesson!" do I hear the reader say? "Were the poor children not even told that India belongs to US?"

No! from the point of view of John an excellent lesson! for was it not the interest created by the lesson that vivified him when he saw the stamp?

The same day when Mary goes home from school her mother says to her, "And what did teacher tell you to-day, Mary?" "Oh, about tigers and elephants." Mary's lesson, I fear, has been a failure—largely perhaps because she has failed to take hold of the word India. Yet Mary perhaps has also secured a growing point, though in our eyes a less valuable one than John's.

Little children about the age of three or four often have a perfect passion for names. Later, however, names frequently become a difficulty, and, as in Mary's case, take a back seat. A delightful illustration of this with which I have recently met I cannot refrain from quoting.

"It was Trafalgar Day, and I told the assembled children the wondrous story of the glory and death of Nelson. A little girl of nine years old came to me with glowing eyes and said: 'I shall never forget that beautiful story as long as I live.'

"At the end of the term, one of the test questions set to that little girl's class was, 'Who was Captain Cook?'

"The little girl worked very hard and produced :—

" ' Captain Cook won the Battle of Trafalgar. A cannon-ball struck him right in the middle of the chest, and he died saying, " Thank God, I have done my duty." '

" The matter was explained to her and she promised to remember.

" At the next term's examination came, ' Who was Napoleon Bonaparte ? '

" The little girl was again busy.

" ' Napoleon Bonaparte won the battle of Trafalgar. A cannon-ball struck him right in the middle of the chest, and he died saying, " Thank God, I have done my duty." '

" The following term, to our immense relief, there was no mention of Trafalgar, and we hoped that the story had come to rest in its proper environment. But the term after that, in answer to the question, ' Who was Sir Francis Drake ? ' we were informed that :—

" ' Sir Francis Drake won the Battle of Trafalgar. A cannon-ball struck him right in the middle of the chest, and he died saying, " Thank God, I have done my duty." '

" At that point the little girl left the school. I often wonder what other mighty heroes have in her examination papers won that great battle and performed the marvellous feat of uttering pious sentences after a cannon-ball had struck them right in the middle of their chest." [1]

The slum child, even after six months at school, has a very poor supply of names at his command. This means that he has little power of clear thought, and that his images are ill-defined. In one school anything with even a hint of spikes or thorns is a " jaggy nettle," in another all flowers except the daisy, which owns a name, are termed " flourish " ; the green leaves on the branch of a tree may be " floors," and the branch itself a " stick " ; any crawling insect seen outside is a clockay.

When we consider that normally a thirst for names

[1] *The Joy of Education*, by William Platt (G. Bell & Sons), a little book full of wisdom as well as wit.

develops in the child at about the age of three, we realize the unpromising condition of these little minds so far as intellectual education is concerned. For a mental thirst which is not gratified tends to disappear. The harm done by our neglect of the formative years three to five is probably irremediable, for developing powers are being allowed to atrophy for want of sustenance, and the doom of the improvident virgins may have to be pronounced on many of the innocent five-year-olds who assemble periodically on the steps of our temples of knowledge.

I am told by a teacher in a slum school that the children seldom make use even of the names of their companions. "Is any one away to-day?" was asked of a newly enrolled class. "Aye, thon wee fat laddie—the yin that fechts wi' me," was the prompt answer of an unusually voluble youth.

Their own names often seem quite unfamiliar to the children, and weeks may sometimes elapse before the teacher succeeds in establishing a satisfactory roll-call. Other factors besides want of familiarity may operate to prevent a child answering to his name. The following instance supplied me by the same teacher is somewhat puzzling. "Jessie Smith was a child who for many weeks made no sign when her name was called. A few days after her arrival, and before she knew her by sight, the teacher called her name repeatedly, but met with no response. She then asked any child who knew Jessie Smith to stand up. Jessie rose to her feet. 'Do you know where Jessie Smith lives?' She nodded. 'Would you go and bring her to school?' Jessie at once set off to bring herself to school, and it was only when she returned with an older sister that the matter was explained."

When we talk about names, we must not think of nouns only. In this foundational training of the imagination we wish to secure content for as many words as possible. Actions should be demonstrated and the appropriate

word supplied. Commands should be given simply in order that the children may translate the sounds into activity and so give them fullness of meaning. All our early work in the teaching of language may be regarded as the provision of raw material for the use of the imagination.

Poverty of language, untrained ears, and empty minds lead to endless misunderstandings on the part of the children—misunderstandings which may be attended by false and misleading imagery. A teacher was once giving a lesson on a bulb ; the lesson was well on its way when she discovered that at least one person in the room thought she was talking about a bull.

One morning the class had just finished the morning prayer. " Help us to do the things we should," repeats the teacher reflectively. " Tell me some of the things we should do." Two hands go up, and a boy answers " Troosers." To him the word " should " means " sewed," and what general meaning, if any, he attached to the line it is impossible to say.

For the training of the imagination on the sense level we possess of course other instruments than pictures. In many cases we ought to provide the actual object, for pictures after all appeal in the main to the visual sense alone. A picture of a bird or of an animal gives full value only to the child who has touch experience of feathers and of fur. To most slum " infants " the word feathers is unknown. When shown a bird they will say it is covered with skin or hair, or perhaps velvet. Stuffed models have to be used with care, however, for many of them are so far from lifelike that they cramp the imagination. A student once told me that her imagination could produce much more life-like pictures of the great foreign carnivora than of the small animals of Britain. For she had learned about the latter from stuffed models and about the former from good pictures of the animals in their natural surroundings.

Stories as an Instrument in the Training of the Imagination.—Once we have by the best means at our command secured material for the imagination to work with, we proceed to give it practice. We cannot really teach children how to exercise their imagination any more than we can teach them how to see. Their exercise of the imagination is, however, just as spontaneous as their exercise of the sense of sight, and the child's ready and eager delight in stories indicates the material required.

In telling stories we have of course other ends in view than the mere practice of the imagination on the sense level. Stories play a very important part in the forming of character and so must be very carefully chosen. The first stories for the very little children should be mere word presentations of their own activities. Just as children see an object better if we draw their attention to the parts severally by naming them, so they realize a situation more clearly when it is described in words. If we know the child well, we shall find we can always secure his rapt attention by stories of his own short past; if his memory serves him, he will co-operate by asking questions, and with shining eyes will penetrate the flimsy disguise we have thrown over the source of our story. "Was that little boy me?" comes the question, and as we watch the expression of deepening thought that follows our answer, we perceive that the child is beginning to realize his own personality.[1]

From these true stories we pass to stories which deal with the possible activities of the little ones to whom we speak. To construct these stories successfully—and especially in the case of slum children the teacher is, I think, dependent on her own inventive powers—we must be thoroughly familiar with the lives of the children. No very high literary standard is, however, demanded. Our

[1] This kind of story must not be overdone as it tends to enhance the attraction of the past (cf. Chap. X).

hearers are not severe critics. We are often amazed at the success attained by a commonplace tale with no well-defined beginning, middle or end. With the hero of these stories the children often identify themselves ; we must therefore be careful with respect to their content. Tales of naughty children are eagerly acclaimed, and some little people, I believe, quite harmlessly get rid of their own mischievous tendencies by vicarious experience. Other children, however, receive the story in such a way that they are pushed on to emulation, and domestic differences may thus arise.

The question of the use of pictures in connection with these stories is a difficult one. As a general rule, I think it is better to make quite sure that the child has the ideas required within his mental content, and then leave him to form his own pictures. Nevertheless variety has charm, and an occasional illustrated story may be a great success from every point of view. If the teacher has the power of making rapid sketches as she goes along, great joy will reward the exercise of this talent. Still we must always bear in mind that it is the children's imagination and not the teacher's that we wish to render active, so that in general the rule given above holds.

Again, if we decide to use a picture, we must remember that the moment of its production is not a matter of indifference, nor is the length of time that we allow for the examination of it. If we are dealing with a class, it will be almost impossible to adjust these things to the needs of everybody. We may produce a picture that clashes with images already forming in the minds of some of the children ; we may linger on it so long that interest in the actual story is lost, or we may pass away from it before our little hearers are ready to accompany us. These are some of the psychological difficulties that have to be faced ; our conduct has to be determined less by general considerations than by the reactions of the children at

the moment. If we realize clearly what we are doing so that we can interpret the symptoms and learn by experience, a little practice will soon give us the sure touch required.

A plan that is often useful is to produce the picture first and from it build up the story. Sometimes the children may be asked to help and may thus be led on to the higher levels of imagination. Sometimes a picture of geographical interest may be shown, and a story told of the life of the people who live in the region represented. Even in the infant class we might easily build up associations with such words as Switzerland, Russia, India, etc., which would be of great value in the children's later life.

The question is often asked what effect the Cinema has on the life of our children. By it stories are presented almost exclusively in picture form. Practically no language training is given, but experience is greatly extended. The children become wonderfully quick at understanding the story, and there can be no doubt of their enjoyment and interest. Even the lurid dramas that are often presented are for most children very harmless. Occasionally one learns of a piece of apparently wanton crime being traced to the suggestion of the Cinema. But on the whole the children keep the life of phantasy apart from that of reality.

The real danger lies in excess. It is not uncommon for children from working class homes to go two or even three times a week to the pictures. They come to live to a large extent in the adventures portrayed on the screen. They demand thrills, and they obtain thrills in an effortless way. Absorption in "penny dreadfuls" means at least that a child has learned to read fluently. But those ten-year-olds to whom reading is still a toilsome art find that the picture house puts no strain upon their powers. Thus is promoted to an alarming extent that "flight from

reality" which is one of the disquieting characteristics of the present generation.

The word Imagination in its narrower significance means the power of forming images. These images may be in terms of any sense, though we are apt in speaking of imagination to think almost exclusively of visual images. Sound images are also common, and in some people indeed play the most important part. Taste, smell, touch, temperature, and motor images are less prominent in our inner life, but in most people occur occasionally.

It is usually taken for granted that the imagery of children is very vivid—more so than that of adults. More evidence is, however, required on this point. Students of about eighteen years of age have often told me that their present imagery is as vivid as any they have ever had, and certainly the results of their introspection seem to me to bear this out.

It is quite clear that the power must be one which develops gradually, as it is dependent on memory. Hence the need for helping children to acquire it and to control it by practice. There are some children who at an early age have such vivid images that they become hallucinatory in character, but these children are the exception. In the majority of children the power requires stimulation and direction rather than repression.

In various exercises which I have obtained from children in the elementary schools with a view to ascertaining the quality and quantity of the imagery which accompanies their realization of meaning I have been struck by the dearth of colour terms in their description of their visual imagery. For example, I obtained from thirty children accounts of what they saw and heard in their minds when *How they brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix* was read to them. They all apparently saw the horses, but not one mentioned the colour of the horses, and few gave any account of the appearance of the riders. Of course

the weakness may be in the power of description, not in the imagery ; yet the same children when asked to describe their breakfast table, as they saw it in their minds, used colour terms freely.

Almost all the writers speak of the riders simply as "men" ; there is no descriptive adjective. The four exceptional papers use the terms "young men," "soldiers," "lads," "boys."

In one paper I find the statement, "I saw the stars shine on man and horse ; it made them shine like silver." The same boy saw "fiery sparks come from the horses' feet."

Another boy says, "I saw the dust coming from the horses' feet like smoke from a fire. I saw the sweat on the horses' faces as they were running."

Here is one complete paper which seems to indicate a succession of pictures. "I saw three horses galloping as fast as any other horses could do. They went fling (filing ?) past the trees. Then I saw one of the horses falling down dead. I saw the stars looking down at them and the sheep in the fields sleeping. The next thing I saw was just one man and horse making straight for a big city."

It is interesting that in this paper there is no mention of sound imagery which appears to a considerable extent in some of the descriptions. The sleeping sheep are an addition of the writer's own. In the poem we are told simply that

> "At Aershot up leaped of a sudden the sun,
> And against him the cattle stood black every one."

Another child gives this detail, "I saw the soldier going through a big gate with tall pillers on each side of the gate."

At the start of the journey

> "'Good Speed!' cried the watch, as the gate bolts undrew;
> 'Speed!' echoed the wall to us galloping through."

No mention is made of pillars, but it is interesting to know that this child's school gate has what may be described as tall pillars on each side of it, and I think it very probable that a memory picture of this gate rose in his mind as the lines were read.

Such details as those suggest that the writers have experienced more distinct imagery than have children who use very general terms largely derived from the poem itself.

It seems to me it might be well if teachers would take occasion to call the attention of children definitely to the power they possess of seeing pictures and hearing sounds "in their heads"; they might thus do something to cultivate a mode of thinking in favour of which there is much to be said. They might also themselves make some interesting discoveries about the development of imagery.

We must, however, beware of taking for granted that imagery is the only way of thinking or of realizing meaning. I was once teaching a class of little children aged about ten. I wished them to draw a map from memory, and I said, "Try to see the picture of the map in your head, and then begin to draw." The brightest child in the class was greatly puzzled by my words, and seemed to have no idea that it was possible to create pictures for oneself.

It is well known that Galton found that many of his scientific friends regarded such expressions as "seeing with the mind's eye" as pure figures of speech. I believe the theory generally held with regard to these men is that their visualizing power had atrophied owing to the abstract nature of their studies. It is, however, possible that in them it never developed, owing to their making use of another mode of thought which served them equally well.

In a former work I have discussed this question and have given some evidence bearing thereon.[1]

Naturally I have given particular attention to the

[1] *The Dawn of Mind*, Chapter VI.

development of imagery in Margaret, especially as it seemed to me she did not belong to the visual type.

I shall here set forth some of the evidence I obtained from her. Its conflicting nature shows how difficult the investigation of a young child's imagery is.

Margaret's imagination has always showed itself markedly in her play. She has, moreover, a bewildering variety of imaginary companions and pets. Perhaps their very number is indicative that she does not visualize them—that they are mere names.

Age four. Said she saw her little kitten playing at the door with the bit of string she had put for it to scratch. . . . Persisted she saw " her little girl " in the backgreen. Would not admit the seeing was " p'etence," but I think it is. I said I couldn't see " the little girl." I was told that to me she was behind a thin post in the middle of the green. . . . Next day I wanted her to stay in the green with her " little girl " for company, but she wished to be with me, and summarily dismissed the little girl as " only p'etence."

Age four and three-quarters. Yesterday asked her if she would like to ride a horse. Said she did ride on Mr. Johnston's horse and in his cart too (this was over a year and a half ago). I asked if she could see herself riding. Said, yes, she could see the back of the horse. Asked if she could see better with her eyes shut. Said, yes. Asked if she could see better with her ears shut. Said, yes. So the matter remains doubtful.

Asked this morning if she ever saw Little Mary in her head. " No," she said, " because I *am* Little Mary." She was sitting in front of the fire, and reflectively remarked, " I tell you one advantage of having a hook instead of a hand ; I could make everybody's toast by putting the bread on the hook." This is an example of her type of imagery, which seems to consist in projecting herself into a person. The accompanying imagery is motor.

This morning I asked her, " What is oil ? " " Stuff

that you rub on your chest" (performed act of rubbing). I asked if she saw oil in her head. No. Could she see it? No. Could she see a zebra? Yes, saw him all stripy in a wood, brown stones on the path. A rhinoceros? Yes. Was he turning his side or his face or his tail to her? His tail. Could she make him turn round? No, he wouldn't. But if she shut her eyes? Yes. How many eyes had he? Two. Ears? Two. What were they like? Pointed like A, only not the bar across. She saw the horn on his nose. . . . Liked the game and asked to go on seeing things. Saw spontaneously balls on a nursery floor [1]—floor brown planks—about a hundred balls, walls green, pictures on them of little girls playing ball, girls white, green dresses, throwing ball. *Did action.*

Asked if she could see little boy with shadow (Stevenson's Poem, "I have a little shadow"). "No." Shut your eyes. "Yes, he's sitting on a wall." She herself was sitting on arm of a chair. His shadow was behind him. He had little green trousers, velvet, navy blue blouse, cotton crêpe, with green collar.

My comment made at the time on this was that I thought the child was beginning to make pictures, but did not make them when listening to stories or to ordinary conversation. Further evidence, however, has led me to believe that she was not forming visual images at all. Later that day she was looking at a toy target, and spontaneously remarked, "I see myself in my head." . . . "I saw myself on the heath playing with my ball." "Why did the target make you see that?" "Because I thought that would be the very thing to make you laugh"!!

Age five. We were naming flowers. I asked if in naming the flowers she saw them. "No," she said, "I just know them." On encouragement professed herself able to visualize a road with us going along it—saw herself

[1] This is interesting in view of what came more than a year later.

as well as the rest of us. Told me which road it was.

At this time, in making a plan of the village in which we were staying, Margaret had very little idea on which side of the road to mark a house or church.

One morning when we were making sentences Margaret remarked, "I'm not thinking with my thinker; I'm thinking with my eyes." But so far as I could make out, this did not refer to visualizing, but to the feeling one sometimes has about the eyes when one withdraws attention from what is before them.

Age five and three-quarters. I had taught the child a little poem about fairies in which occurs the line,

> 'You go past the gardener's shed and you just keep straight ahead.''

I asked her if she could see the little wood and other things mentioned in the poem. "Yes," she said, "and I *feel* myself going past the shed." The last statement is true; the Yes was only to please me.

Age six. Margaret struck me as now being able to give reliable testimony about her images; so I put some direct questions to her. She positively denied being able to see things when her eyes are shut, or to see things in her head at all. When she closes her eyes she sees what she calls rainbow-coloured balls rolling from right to left (compare above). I asked for a description, and she gave me two successions of four balls. She cannot alter the colour at will. They are always blue, green, black and red. She sees a yellow one only "very occasionally." The following day spontaneously Margaret put her hands over her eyes and said, "When I do this the balls come any way, they come marching to me. I see a yellow one now. Now I see a daisy. Yellow petals all round about and purple in the centre. Red balls all round it. I never get white things."

A day or two later the subject of dreams came up. I asked again if she was sure she had no pictures in her head

at other times. She was quite definite she had not, " except the balls I told you about." I questioned her as to sound in dreams. She was quite clear that she heard no sounds except the people talking.

On the plane of the imagination some of us can be blind and deaf, as Helen Keller is on the plane of the senses ; yet like her we can surmount our difficulties, and enter by another path into the great world of the mind, which is common to all.

Margaret's path is undoubtedly that of motor imagery or self-projection, as I have called it elsewhere. I could give abundant evidence of this.

The " balls " are, I think, what are known as " images on the field of darkness," and are conditioned by the internal activity of the retina.[1]

In Margaret's normal life sound images are apparently deficient though perhaps present to some extent in dreams. There is some evidence to show that her temperature images may be vivid. She protested one day against pretending we were in India on the plea that she was too hot already ; whereas a year and a half before, in winter, she welcomed a desert game which involved pretending that the sand on which we walked burned our feet, but objected to a North Pole game because it was much too cold to play it.

Vivid visual or other imagery is a potent aid to memory, and much more use might be made of it than is customary at present. Some children, for example, could remember dates easily if they visualized a scene representing the event, and then, as it were, hung the needful numbers on to it ; or they might be taught to visualize a scheme for a century, say a large square divided into a hundred small ones, in which events might be placed according to their date. Some children could distinguish between the

[1] Mellone and Drummond, *Elements of Psychology*, Chapter XIV, § 3.

centuries by making these mental squares different colours.

The power of forming images may be of great practical use. It may also add greatly to the pleasure of life. Many of my students say that for them the joy of reading poetry would be gone if the visual and other images which accompany it were to disappear. At the same time it is well to remember that there is another side. During the black years of war, life must have been indeed terrible to those who, safe by their own fireside, could feel all the misery of the trenches, could see their sons go forth to battle, and hear the groans of wounded men. If our imagery is vivid, it is essential for our own happiness that we should learn to control it.

CHAPTER VII

IMAGINATION—II

Dramatic Expression. "Bread and water, warmth and sleep. These are the needs of the body. The needs of the spirit are diverse. The chief spiritual need of the child is play, and with it a place to play in. Big grassy gardens, a stream to fish in, to paddle in, to adventure on, and to dam, cellars wherein to play at distressed Royalists, hayfields to roll in, old trees to climb, bushes to cover the amateur brigand: these are the beginnings of the birthright of a child." [1]

How few of our town children have even the beginnings of their birthright! Yet though their environment helps them little, with the wonderful adaptability and ingenuity of childhood they find means to play. The educational possibilities of the universal tendency of children to dramatic expression are just beginning to be realized,[2] and we have need of graded exercises which would make their appeal to the inner needs of the children, and at the same time lead them onward.

Many people, I know, will feel inclined to oppose any interference with the imaginative games of childhood, and will declare that far better results will appear if the little ones are left free to develop these activities on their own lines. This, however, is not the case. If a judicious amount of help is not given, either by older children or by

[1] E. Nesbit, *These Little Ones.*

[2] H. Caldwell Cook, *The Play-way: The Dramatic Method in Teaching.*

adults, the play will stereotype on a comparatively low level, and will by and by die out. If the tendency is a universal characteristic of childhood, the conduct of many adults shows how completely it dies out, if left untrained.

To be allowed to act a story is a delight to many children. But this is a difficult exercise, and should be preceded by something simpler.

I once tried to induce some little children about five years of age to act a fairy tale, which they had just heard for the second time. My attempt was a dead failure. There was no spontaneity about the children ; they would scarcely speak, and every word had to be put into their mouths. My general impression was that they regarded the whole affair as purposeless and extremely silly. But even this opinion they did not hold very strongly. My little niece at the same age would have acclaimed the idea and thrown herself into it heart and soul. Indeed at that time she could scarcely hear a story to its end before she was demanding whether she might play it.

The exercise I had suggested to the Kindergarten children was beyond them. They had had no previous preparation. They were uninspired, lifeless, inert.

Of Margaret's early spontaneous dramatic activities I have spoken elsewhere.[1] This mode of expression seemed to come to her naturally, and I have not so much cultivated it as fallen in with it.

When she was four and a half she was taken to see three of Hawthorne's " Tanglewood Tales " acted. This was her first visit to the theatre, and was of course a great occasion. She looked and listened with concentrated attention and quite lost herself in the story. When Pandora, having once opened the fatal box, was sitting upon it wondering whether she dare open it again in response to Hope's gentle pleading, a little voice piped up from among the audience, " No, don't."

[1] *The Dawn of Mind*, p. 104 ff.

A few days later the child asked to play Pandora. She was Epimetheus, and a big stuffed ball served us as the box. She clasped it in her arms, and it was wonderful to see the earnestness with which she begged me (Pandora) not to open it. It was "left in her charge"; she had "given her word." I was unmoved. She then told me what was in it, in order that I might be induced not to open it. I objected that Epimetheus could not know what was in it. She then laid down the precious box, and coming close to me informed me confidentially that she had seen what happened on the stage. This queer intermingling of reality with fiction is very characteristic of this child, and I think of many children.

It is easy to see that acting of this kind may have a very marked moral effect. Margaret is decidedly a person of her word and has distinct respect for a bargain once made. The Pandora episode may easily have had some share in helping her to realize the meaning of a plighted word.

When children have in marked degree the habit of identifying themselves with imaginary characters, a great opportunity, which is at the same time a great responsibility, is offered to those who have the guidance of their education.

One day, on going to my room, I heard a voice uttering the words, "Mischief, pure mischief!" I entered softly and repeated the words myself. I found my six-year-old niece busily engaged in buttoning up my dressing-gown as it hung on the wall. On probing the matter I found she was an elf—Pease-blossom. I suggested that she might be a kind elf.

"What is kind?" inquired the elf.

"Good."

"What is good?"

This was a very ignorant elf, and I was somewhat nonplussed, as there were signs of real mischief in the air. I had no desire to raise a molehill into a mountain, so I

fortunately bethought myself of a spell which I had found effective on other occasions. I announced that I was going to hug the elf good. I took it in my arms, first looking in its face, and declaring confidently, though not without some inward misgivings, that it looked a very promising elf for the experiment.

For a few moments I hugged and patted it in silence, save for an occasional soft remark that I felt it becoming good.

Then "Don't you feel a change coming over you?" I inquired.

The elf assented.

I continued the process a little longer and then set the creature down, pronouncing it extremely good. It looked round for something to do. Naturally it occurred to its mind that a good elf would wish to undo the mischief it had previously done. This it proceeded to do, and so the Pease-blossom episode ended.

This episode is part of that larger system of thought which centres round the character of Puck.[1]

Perhaps I should say that I do not always employ such indirect methods of moral education. Some ten days after the episode narrated above I again found a mischievous elf in my room. This time I simply lifted it and put it outside the door. This I had not time to close before a *child* was butting against me shouting "I'm good, I'm good."

The repetition compulsion (*see* Chapter X) must be remembered in this connection. The child's demand for repetition of such an attractive performance as that described above may easily become very tiresome to the adult.

The question is sometimes raised whether we should follow children's spontaneous choice in regard to the stories we allow them to dramatize. The answer to this is I

[1] See *Five Years Old or Thereabouts*, pp. 74 and 96.

think decidedly, No. For one thing children's literary taste is not their own at all ; it is certainly determined to some degree by their mental make-up—the character of the imagery that is natural to them, for instance ; but it is determined to a far greater degree by their environment. We therefore must not be guided by their expressed tastes, which are often dictated by caprice, the origin of which it is difficult to trace—but by other considerations. Of these the chief is, of course, the effect that the story has on the child's character and intelligence. I need scarcely say that the child's enjoyment and spontaneous co-operation are essential, but these can be secured in connection with material of very different values. The test is does the activity tend to develop, to lead on to something higher, or does it tend to become stereotyped on a low level, or even to exercise a harmful influence on the child's life and conduct.

Recently I spent a summer holiday with my six-year-old niece. Towards the beginning of the time I told her the story of the Blackbird that made War upon the King. It is an excellent story, having many elements in it which make an unfailing appeal to the child mind. The blackbird has had his wife stolen from him by the King. He attires himself with helmet, sword, and drum and goes forth to recover her. He struts along beating his drum and picks up several powerful allies on his way to the King's palace. By the help of his allies he signally defeats all the King's attempts to destroy him ; and at last the poor King is glad to allow him to depart in triumph with his wife. From Margaret's point of view this story was a delightful one to act, and she never tired of it. From my point of view it was a failure. To an older child who was able to appreciate the absurdities it contained at their right value, or to a child who was one of many, and therefore not subject to the peculiar dangers of an only child, it might not have done any harm. Fortunately Margaret is a very sunny

little person who accepts suggestion very readily, so that I had little difficulty in allowing it to slip out of our repertory.

Very different were the results with *The Cat that Walked by Itself*.[1]

This is not an easy story for two players to present. However, few quick changes are beyond Margaret, and in some respects I also am an adaptable person.

As the play developed the chief characters became Man and Woman, and as each of these characters had duties which attracted my little companion greatly, we played them, roughly speaking, turn about. Woman has the congenial task of winning Man from his wild ways, of telling him to wipe his feet before he enters her cave, of cooking the food, and of sending him to bed, while she makes the singing magic that woos the wild animals from their haunts in the wet wild woods. Man, on the other hand, has the joy of hunting, of being distinctly refractory to Woman's civilizing efforts, and of throwing things at the cat. Obviously too, in the circumstances, he had to be all the wild animals. No wonder selection was difficult.

In the course of our play arose one of those interesting psychological puzzles which are so frequent in the emotional life of children. I must premise that Margaret early developed a great objection to people being killed. It is of little use to attempt to tell her a history story, for she scents battle from afar, and will have none of it. One morning when I, as Man, woke up to find Wild Dog making himself at home in my cave, I fiercely threatened to kill him, and it was with difficulty that Woman induced me to refrain.

Next time, when the critical moment approached, Margaret emerged from the story to tell me I must not try to kill Wild Dog. I demurred. "You mustn't really," she begged; "besides, it's not in the book."

[1] Kipling, *The Just-So Stories*.

Well, Man really belongs to Mr. Kipling, and I have been brought up to respect the authenticity of texts, so I yielded.

Next night, evidently fearing that temptation might be too much for me, my little companion again interrupted the play to warn me that I must not overstep the prescribed limits. That evening something caused an interlude after which she expressed a wish to be Man.

It was the turn of Wild Cow to come. I, being now Woman, received her and installed her in the cave. In the morning, as usual, I awoke Man. What was my amazement when he fiercely and persistently threatened to kill the poor beast! Twice he threw her out of the cave; and it was only when I had the happy thought of giving him a drink of the warm white milk that he consented to suffer her to live.

Towards the beginning of the Cat plays Woman woke me with great roughness, saying, "It's seven o'clock." I objected that this roughness would not conduce to my civilization, and that, moreover, we hadn't any watches. I suggested she should say "The sun is up," or something like that. It happened about that time in the course of a morning walk that some one quoted:

> "Started a linnet up in the croft,
> 'Wake up, little maiden, the sun is aloft.'"

That evening at our play hour, when it was time for me to be awakened, I heard a sweet voice singing:

> "Started a linnet up in the croft,
> 'Wake up, O husband, the sun is aloft.'"

A gentle kiss was then pressed upon my forehead, and I awoke feeling that there must have been pleasant moments in the life of the cave man.

When I say that the Cat story developed in a way in which the Blackbird did not, I mean that questions were constantly arising in the natural course of the play, which it demanded real knowledge to answer. For example, one

evening Man brought in some salt he had found in a field. I insisted he had made a mistake, and meant he had found it in a cave. He then wanted some sugar, and said he would find a sugar cave. The question of a knife arose. Man said he would get some steel and make one. I said there was no steel to be had, and that his first weapon must be stone.

Then discussions would arise on various matters. One night at the meal, which always played a prominent part, Woman began eating with a fork, and wished to give me one. I said fingers were good enough for me. She said, "I'm beginning to make rules."

That morning we had happened to have a talk about rules in connection with spelling. The child said she would spell "cat" any way she liked. I pointed out that if every one did this no one would be able to read what anyone else wrote; and we wandered on to consider how rules are always bound to arise when people live in a community; but the resurgence of this matter in the course of the story came as a surprise to me.

Woman went on, "After many, many years, you'll *have* to use knives and forks," and then she returned to the question of rules. "Well," said Man, "I'll make the rules." "No, you can't. One man can't. Government will make the rules." Further talk elicited the fact that one rule would be that every one should spell Pat P-A-T. The close connection with our morning's conversation is thus demonstrated. In child study one constantly has good opportunities of perceiving the latent thoughts which determine the contents of consciousness and dictate the spoken word. Soon after this Man decreed that Woman was penetrating too far into futurity, and went to sleep.

Another evening I had procured two flints. In the recesses of our cave we struck sparks, and the talk turned on primitive methods of making fire.

In short I was always knocking at the bounds of my

own knowledge, and discovering that had I been possessed of all the learning of all the antiquarians I could have made good use of it all.

Even in this story I occasionally had difficulty in keeping my little companion in the land of reality and preventing her from wandering off into that of pure phantasy. Just so far as I succeeded in doing this was the play wholesome. When I allowed her to begin to romance the value of the mental activity sank at once. On the basis of my experience with Margaret—and my opinion is strengthened by other evidence on the same lines—I am tempted to indulge in the generalization that the free play of fancy unchecked by regard for the laws of reality or of art tends to deterioration, the study and observance of truth to intellectual and moral growth.

CHAPTER VIII

MAGIC AND THE CHILD

It is not possible to consider the nature of the imagination in childhood and the best mode of training it without taking up the vexed question of fairy stories. The heat that is engendered, when any one proposes, or is thought to propose, to "deprive children of fairy tales," or to destroy their "beautiful" belief in the fairies, is evidence of the sad mess we have made of this interesting and lovely world. For it is we who want the fairy tales, not the children. In their credulity we find vicarious satisfaction. "As for Peter Pan, we take the kiddies to see him for our own sakes as well as theirs. When Tinker Bell is dying, and Peter asks us to save her life by clapping our hands if we believe in fairies, it is we who make most of the noise. Our eyes are a little moist, and there's a lump in our throat, but we clap our hands till they are sore. We don't believe in fairies, but we would terribly like to."

When one reads or tells fairy tales to children one must remember that one is giving material which represents an adult world and adult interests, though on a childish plane. Here partly lies its attractiveness and also its danger. The fairy tale deals with birth and marriage, love and hate, jealousy, vengeance, and death. These are themes for the adult, but they are treated as by the child. In the fairy tale primitive instincts and crude theories find full expression. The youngest son finds compensation for the disabilities which real life inflicts on him. The stepmother always cruelly abuses her husband's beautiful and virtuous

(the words are synonymous in fairyland) children and favours her own ugly and spiteful offspring. Marriage represents the high-water mark of bliss. The immediate consequence of marriage is the baby, whose small size, e.g. Tom Thumb, often forms no small part of its charm. Sometimes the desired baby is produced by the Queen eating some magic food (a common child theory of birth), and it is not incredible that instead of a baby there may be produced a dog or some other monstrosity.

If we can wipe from our eyes the glamour which for obvious reasons prevents us from seeing fairy tales as they are, we shall perceive both how unsuitable such legends are for the little child, and also why to many children they are so attractive.

Listen to this reminiscent statement of a young girl.

"To me Cinderella was the story of stories. I must have known it by heart at four years old, and even now the tale can delight me when it is played in pantomime. Sometimes I imagined myself in the title rôle, and I suffered when Cinderella suffered, grew rigid at the sudden thought my glass slipper was gone, and ended up by adoring the shining prince of Fairyland in a way which Cinderella herself could hardly emulate."

To many people the attitude here recalled will seem harmless—even attractive. A tender smile hovers about their lips as they read. Their feelings are those of the adult spectator of Peter Pan, who says: "We do not believe in fairies, but oh, we would dearly like to."

But when we look at the matter with unprejudiced eyes we must ask, Is it right or wise to enthrone in the susceptible heart of Four-years-old the shining prince of fairyland to act as unconscious rival of all the work-a-day suitors who may step forth in later years? In the light of the enormous influence which psychology now assigns to the impressions of babyhood I think we must pause before we answer Yes.

Let us consider another reminiscence.

"The first story I have a vivid recollection of being told is the very famous one of 'Little Red Riding Hood.' As the teacher was telling us that story, I began gradually to pass from this world into the world known as Fairyland. I began to feel that I myself was Little Red Riding Hood. I could see myself dressed in a little red cloak with a hood attached to it. I could picture myself going through the wood and meeting the wolf who spoke to me. I could picture the grandmother's house as my own home, and the bedroom where Little Red Riding Hood found the wolf was my own little bedroom at home. I also saw myself standing in front of the wolf's bed and asking the questions which Red Riding Hood asked him; and I could hear the wolf answering, although now I can understand that the wolf did no such thing."

This naïve conclusion seems to me to indicate that the writer has not emancipated herself so completely as she would have us believe from the thraldom of Faerie. The description is a good one of the condition which the story-teller can produce, and which many of them love to produce in little children. But in the case of the tiny travellers who are still so near the magic realm of infancy as dimly to remember that faery land forlorn, and sweet and far from cliff and scar to hear the horns of Elfland faintly blowing, is it right or wise to cause them to turn backward longing looks, instead of with joyous heart and expectant gaze breasting life's upward path? Let the old dream dreams, let the young see visions.

Some little girls show plainly their identification of themselves with Little Red Riding Hood by imploring their mother to make them a scarlet cloak and hood. The story is usually a favourite, but not always. The little Cinderella quoted above says, "The tale of Little Red Riding Hood I dreaded and hated. It was once read to me and the horror it produced in me did not abate for years afterwards.

I always rushed past that story, and shut my eyes at the picture of the wolf lying in the grandmother's bed."

The great love of little children for fairy stories and their deep interest in them are often adduced as a reason for providing them.

> "Dumb yearnings, hidden appetites are ours,
> And they must have their food,"

sings Wordsworth in his special pleading for the friends of his own childhood.

It is, I admit, probable that the racial heritage which the child brings with him will make him peculiarly receptive to the ideas which are found throughout the fairy lore of all countries and of all nations. But the interest which springs from this may equally well be an argument against giving him access to these ideas till he has experience enough to separate the gold from the dross.

In one of our educational journals I once read a letter from a mother who had been a teacher. In her teacher days she had often kept a class of little ones rapt in wonder as she told them of Tom Thumb, Jack the Giant Killer, and the Sleeping Beauty. Her own little girl she at first treated to the same fare. But night now revealed to her the error of her ways. The child's sleep was disturbed, and the mother's heart recognized that she was waking prematurely appetites and yearnings which should have remained hidden and dumb till their time was ripe.

I have already pointed out that to the young child this world is of necessity like the world of the fairy story, and it is not till this period has passed and the child has rendered himself at home in a world of men, that he can afford to listen to "the fairy mimbling mambling in the garden."

It is not easy for the adult mind to realize the hold that the lore of fairyland has upon the mind of the child. And in these early days the pull is backward, not forward; it means retrogression, not progress.

One morning Margaret was wading in the sea. Near her

was Phyllis, a charming little girl about her own age, also an only child. Margaret told me the story of their "making friends." Phyllis threw a piece of seaweed to her, saying, "Would you like that piece of seaweed?" Margaret said, "No, thanks." This looked to me like a *cul de sac*, but the situation was retrieved by Margaret next throwing a piece to Phyllis "in a friendly manner." Phyllis wasted no more time: "Let's play we're milkmaids, and we step into a fairy ring." They threw stones to make the ring. Then Phyllis said, "Don't you wish you were a princess?" And Margaret said, "Rather." So they went back over the sand, and their little cottage was changed into a palace. Then they played they were witches, and in turn worked magic on each other. Phyllis started with "Oh, dear, I'm so thirsty; I'll just change this little girl into a pool so that I can have a drink." Margaret followed with, "Oh, I do want a limpet for the tippety top of my house, and there aren't any; I think I'll just change this little girl into one." Then Phyllis changed her into green seaweed to decorate the house, and Margaret changed Phyllis to a stone to put on the top of a door; but Phyllis changed herself back because she was really a witch, and Margaret said, "Oh, I'm sorry, sister, I didn't know you were out just now."

Such play as this in moderation is probably quite harmless. But for some children it has a fascination which makes moderation impossible. It is not without significance that Phyllis was what is called a "high-strung" child whose removal from school had been advised by the doctor. Yet Phyllis is badly in need of a kindly Mr. Gradgrind, who will show her that reality has charms far more true and lasting than the glamour which now seems to her so attractive. She is at least in danger of joining the band of those who find all this workaday world dark, drab, and uninteresting, and who attribute to fiction all beauty, all delight. Yet this is surely to commit a sin

against the Holy Ghost, for fact is God's work, fiction is man's.

In early life the pull of magic is backwards, not forwards. The Hungarian psychologist, Ferenczi, distinguishes three periods in infancy thus, (*a*) the period of omnipotence, (*b*) the period of omnipotence with the help of magic gesture, (*c*) the period of magic thinking and magic words.

The period of omnipotence is pre-natal. Everything then comes to the child without effort. Here we have the prototype of Nirvana, a state of ineffable bliss, where is neither desire nor thought nor even knowledge.

When Patricia was an infant whose life was still counted by weeks she used sometimes in her bath to show signs of reverting to the period of omnipotence. She slipped down in the water, resting of course on her mother's hand ; her little limbs resumed the pre-natal position ; her face expressed satisfaction unalloyed ; she took no notice of us ; in some indefinable way she seemed to be out of our world, beyond our reach. I was reminded of the look of fatuous content one sees on the countenances of some of the Indian gods. Some psychologists have of recent years familiarized us with the expression " unconscious phantasy." I believe that Patricia in such moments as those referred to entered upon the pleasure path of phantasy. It was not unconscious exactly, but it was wordless, indescribable, impossible for us to conceive. Is it incredible that some vague memory of such an experience may in later life tantalize her as Bottom's dream tantalized him ? Perhaps she too may feel that it passes the wit of man to tell what she knows—and yet does not know. Here, it may be, are those colours of the dawn which as trailing clouds of glory enwrap our infancy, and as they fade from our memory become transformed in imagination into glowing prophecy.

With eyes sharpened by Ferenczi's teaching I have seen Patricia at a later period use magic gestures and magic words. " Ta " is a magic word known to most babies. Of

its significance they are of course quite ignorant; they know only its effect. By magic gestures they cause the giants around them to do their will; and many of them have a sad time of disillusionment when their magic ceases to work; that is, when the adults around begin to think they are growing too big to be treated as babies any more.

I do not think Patricia can ever have formed a very fixed belief in the potency of her own magic, for her social entourage often declined to act as the slaves of her lamp. The consequence of such treatment is that, like Margaret Fuller, she "accepts the Universe." Even at bedtime—a time when many an infant is master of the household—Patricia's mother simply lays her in her cot and walks off accompanied by a cheerful "Ta-ta" from her baby, whom we often hear still cooing to herself half an hour later. Then comes silence and the little one sleeps.

A writer in *The British Journal of Psychology* (April, 1921) maintains that the infant's world is "a world in which the creations of imagination are not in any way discriminated from the objective occurrences in the outer world. . . . A mind which necessarily begins its development with an incompetency so complete, will, even years later, not only see nothing incongruous in fairy tales, myths and legends, but finds itself accurately and sympathetically reflected in fabulous creations of all kinds. To the young child, therefore, the supernatural and the natural are one and the same; time and place impose no limits, physical laws do not operate. And it may safely be added that the younger the child the more completely do the two spheres of the real and the imaginary coalesce. The world to an infant is created and peopled in harmony with its changing feelings, to which, indeed, it merely serves to give expression."

To me this is entirely a false and misleading presentation of the child's world. It is a flagrant example of that underestimation of the intelligence of the infant which is to be

found so widely spread, and which has its own psychological explanation. To talk of the creations of the imagination in infancy is a misuse of terms; for the imagination cannot create, at least in the ordinary sense of the words, until the necessary material in the form of free memories has been acquired.

It is perhaps true that "to the young child the supernatural and the natural are one and the same." This is the reason why there is no pleasure in showing him conjuring tricks. So little is he blinded by custom that the conjuror's marvels are in his eyes no greater than those he sees every day. His attitude, however, may be more fairly compared with that of the scientist than with that of the open-mouthed believer in any hocus pocus. To the scientist also the supernatural and the natural are one and the same; the supernatural is simply the natural which has not yet been brought within the realm of law.

It is also true that children "see nothing incongruous in fairy tales, myths and legends," but this is simply because they are necessarily ignorant of the operation of those physical laws which it has taken humanity so many ages to discover. In this connection we have much need to remind ourselves of the story of the sailor who, on his return from a long voyage, regaled his friends with tales of all the marvels he could think of; when his invention failed he turned to the truth and spoke of flying fish; but at this they drew the line; such a travesty of nature as they considered that they could not tolerate. The children's experience is so limited that they readily take statements for true which to an adult seem obviously false. But it is entirely our fault if they "regularly pass through a stage in which they believe in fairies, goblins, ogres, ghosts, etc." In these matters we, for our own ends, too often shamelessly exploit the trustfulness of children.

The writer quoted above further states: "It is only to

be supposed that all children must pass through a belief in magic before they attain, by the help of their peripheral senses, and guided by the reality principle, an understanding of the laws of nature, their immutability, permanence and independence of human wishes." If there is any truth in this statement, it springs from the fact that most children are hindered in their endeavour to find out the laws of nature by the unwise interference of adults. This is the real reason why the stages distinguished by Ferenczi may be observed. Let us not blame the child's nature for what is the fault of his nurture. No one who had watched, as I have done, the expression of intense scientific interest on Patricia's baby face as time and again she tested her wordless formulation of the law of falling bodies, could for a moment doubt that a conviction of " the immutability, permanence, and independence of human wishes," which characterize the laws of nature, was impressing itself deep on her fragrant little soul.

The question of Magic and the child is one of great practical importance. Magic in this connection means obtaining the fulfilment of your wishes by charms and incantations instead of by work. The pleasure principle is followed ; the reality principle as far as possible is ignored. The two come to be regarded not only as distinct, but as hostile. Work is performed only under compulsion. On every side we see it regarded as a curse instead of a blessing. On every side we see civilization retarded by the infantile personality thus produced. On every side we hear the cry for " nurse " to come and pick up the toys which we have wilfully thrown away.

Yet how unjust it is to the child to call this " infantilism." The child from the first stands for the principle of reality : he stands for joy in work : he is the living spirit of independence. By our faulty education we lead him to worship false gods ; we give him fairy stories when he asks for truth ; we encourage him to find in phantasy

a satisfaction which we basely tell him reality cannot give. And having thus seduced him from the path of virtue we reproach him with what he has become.

By the nervous breakdowns and insanities of the present day we learn that *La Belle Dame sans Merci* still bears off her victims; but those we hear of are few in comparison with those of whom we do not hear; there is probably hardly an individual who has not suffered at the hands of his parents and teachers some avoidable disfigurement or disability, or crippling of his powers; and when we consider the prevalent modes of teaching young children in connection with our knowledge of their results we must, I think, sadly recognize that

> "The primroses scattered by April,
> The stars of the wide Milky Way,
> Cannot outnumber the hosts of the children
> Magic hath stolen away."

Let it not be thought that I deprecate all phantasy. When it reaches a high level, its creator finds his way back to reality by means of the rewards and honours assigned him by his fellows. The musician, the writer, the sculptor, in one word, the artist has, like the child, found out how to combine the reality and the pleasure principle. It is obvious, however, that he must first have found his way to a high level; he must have lived and he must have learnt. Otherwise success will never be his. On a level below this phantasy may inspire the individual life; projected into the future it may serve as a beacon to guide the progress of the wayfarer. I have already hinted that even Patricia's baby phantasy may serve to suffuse her future ideals with the light that never was on sea or land.

It is not then in a spirit of hostility to phantasy that I write. It is because I recognize its enormous power both for good and evil that I think we should study its nature, that we may use without abusing it. At every level on which it manifests itself there is a danger point beyond

which it is not safe to go. It seems not impossible that many of the children of whom medical science can say only that they are suffering from defect of intelligence have gone beyond the danger point, have given themselves over to phantasy which is largely unconscious, or at least wordless, and have abandoned the struggle with an unyielding world. It has been suggested that even epilepsy —that mysterious disease—is nothing but an attempt to take by storm the Heaven known in infancy.

There are certain typical phantasies which are so widely spread that it seems worth while to examine them a little more closely. They are very common in childhood, and an adult denial may merely mean that present interests have relegated these fancies of the past to oblivion. Moreover, they are in the main the product of the unconscious mind, and like dreams of the night easily dissociate themselves from our real life and refuse to obey our call.

Let us consider one or two of the chief types.

1. **The Desert Island** or **My Kingdom Phantasy.** The interest of the phantasy is that it can be carried on at almost every level of mental life, and this particular type is responsible for some noble literature. Who has not been in his own way, and according to his own genius, Robinson Crusoe or Prospero ? [1]

2. **The Family Romance.** This phantasy tends to be more easily and more completely forgotten than that just dealt with, because as we grow older we are apt to recognize its true source in the self-display instinct, and for that and other reasons we become more or less ashamed of it and banish it from our mind. It goes to the tune of *The Ugly Duckling*, and in one form or another is widely represented in fiction. Here is an instance in which the

[1] For an illuminating account of a child-created kingdom see De Quincey's Autobiography. The relevant passage is quoted in Niemeyer, *Children* and *Childhood*, pp. 177–8.

romance starts from a fairy tale, but that is a mere accident ; the real cause is in the essential nature of the child.

" I had been reading a fairy tale about a princess who had been stolen from her parents when an infant, and her foster parents were very cruel to her. This story had got rather a hold on me, and a chance remark that I was not very like either parent set loose a train of thought. Of course I was a stolen princess. This idea was confirmed by something said to me one day. I had been behaving very badly, and mother said, ' *My* little girl wouldn't do that,' by way of reproof. Of course her little girl wouldn't do that. I wasn't her little girl. I began to see imaginary grievances. I drew parallels between the much wronged princess's case and mine, and so accounted for my self-created woes. It was quite a while before I lost this notion."

This example is interesting because it shows clearly the ingenuity with which the phantasy turns the most ordinary happenings of everyday life into food for itself.

3. **The Martyr or the Illness Phantasy.** A little boy was crying very bitterly. When asked what was the matter he sobbed out, " Mother gave me a thrashing and it wasn't me to blame ; but if I die to-morrow she will be sorry for what she has done."

This form of self-display is very common, and sometimes gives rise to conduct which may be very worrying to those who do not see behind the scenes. Here is a typical reminiscence :

" I remember that, as a child, when reproved unjustly, as I thought, I used to plan out how to make the perpetrators of such injustice repent for their harshness. A favourite way was to be implicitly obedient, but never to utter a word, and to look and act as though overcome by a secret grief, yet nobly overcoming self and doing the daily routine. This no doubt was quite a success in its way. Further peculiarity in this direction was to abstain from

food, or take only the minimum in the hope that I would die—and then they'd be sorry. How I would gloat over this, and my vivid imagination would picture myself lying dead, so realistically, that tears of self-pity would roll down my face. Mother would ask what was wrong, and I'd sob out 'Nothing.' But this abstinence from food did not last long, as hunger forced me to capitulate, and in that glorious or inglorious time all wrongs were forgotten."

4. **The Magic Carpet.** The two forms of phantasy last mentioned involve our relations to others; they are social phantasies; this one, like the first, is purely egoistic. It may spring from the same root as the flying dream,[1] but even if a humble origin be established, it yet points the way to aviation and the mastery of the air.

In childhood these phantasies are often shared, and they are taken so seriously by all the participants that quarrels and much heartburning and petty tyranny may arise.

Thus "Alick loved anything mechanical or unusual, and his favourite form of story was some version of the Magic Carpet (Arabian Nights) or the Flying Horse. He, of course, possessed these wonderful things, and if we interrupted him in the process of the story, or crossed him, then we were forbidden a share of the magic conveyance, and this proved an effective silencer."

In many children these phantasies are quite harmless. Their danger consists in this, that they mean a turning away from reality, a subtraction of strength from its duties, and a finding of satisfaction within oneself, and apart from one's fellows. In certain cases they may lead to what appears to us a living death.

Some years ago, when I first became familiar with the compositions of children in our elementary schools, I was amazed to find many of them apparently quite unconsciously drifting into the use of the past tense, as if what they were describing had actually happened to them.

[1] Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, pp. 236–239.

Here, for example, is the beginning of a composition entitled "My Ideal," in which the transition I refer to takes place in the second last sentence, and shows identification probably with some hero of the Picture House.

"Oh how I would like to be a man that I often read about in books. His name is Bufflo Bill the king of the plains. I would like to live in the west Indies and some of the thrilling adventures with the Indians. One time I had a great adventure with a tribe of Redskins called Kiowas. This would not have happened if my greatest friends had not been captured. . . ."

This effusion is neatly written; the spelling and expression are not too bad; and though the geographical knowledge leaves something to be desired, probably the young author has not passed the danger point.

I do not feel so happy about the ten-year-old Jacob whose composition I now take up. It is not so neat as David's, being somewhat blotted. It is entitled, "Who I wish to be like and Why," and the writer leaps straight into the middle of his phantasy, which towards the end exemplifies the third type mentioned above.

"When I was a sailor. I was on board. The Captain said that we were to fire at the German Submarine, and we knocked of the top of the Submarine and it came up, up and we fired. At last it went down. So one of the men got a V.C." (I suppose modesty forbids further particularization at this point.) "We all went on and at last the ship went down and 200 were drowned and 102 were saved and there was 95 were to go to th the hospital and I was one that was going to the hospital, When I came out of the hospital I got ten days leave. After that I went to France, and I was wounded there, and I was in the hospital for a year."

Very possibly there is here identification with an older brother or friend.

I now turn to Freddie's composition. It is entitled

" My Dream." Its content is the same Hospital phantasy. The poor writing, the bad spelling, the rambling style all indicate that in this case the danger point is passed: Freddie is not making good, he is not finding satisfaction in reality.

" Last night I Dream the a little girl got runover with a car and then the motoramblesen came then the poor little girl went away to the infirbery and then her mother came up to see her and then when the bell riang she went out and went home and next morning she went back agian and she tok some cakes and bread and butter and then she sayed a little while until the bell ring agin and then she had to go home and her father come and said where his Rose she laying in bed and then her came up to see her and then he gave her a sixpes and the bell raing he had to go away home agin and that night Rose come home in the motor and her mother was gald."

This purports to be a real dream. The central character in a dream is always oneself, and I am not at all surprised to find Freddie in his dreams playing the part of a girl. It might well seem to him that a woman's life is easier and more desirable than that of a man. Some weeks after the dream episode I went to see Freddie.

" How have you been since I saw you last ? " I asked.

" Been in an accident," he replied.

" How was that ? "

" Was knocked down by a motor and the motor ambulance came and took me to the Infirmary."

" Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. Where were you hurt ? "

He indicated his leg. I led him on to give me other particulars, some of which I knew to be false, while others were contradictory. I easily demonstrated, what I suspected from the first, that the whole thing was a day dream or phantasy.

Alan is a little boy of four, a pretty fragile-looking child, who has never made himself at home here. " Does he

dream much ?" I said to his mother. "He's always dreaming," she replied. At that moment he entered, accompanied by his younger sister. She was all eagerness to tell about some music they had heard in the street. "Look at Alan," said his mother, "he's away now." He stood by his sister's side, passive, inarticulate. Perhaps the music was still sounding in his ears.

When the phantasies of early childhood are put into words they are bound to seem poor and thin, and to cause one to wonder how any satisfaction can be found in them. We must, however, remember that these children, who have, from an early age, indulged in phantasy, have very often an exceptionally poor command of words. The phantasies as they exist in their minds may be much richer in content and emotion than we could guess by merely listening to their account of them. Infantile phantasies, perhaps the most dangerous of all, are of course altogether outside of the region of words.

Possibly here as elsewhere the right course is the middle one. A life in which phantasy played no part might be a life without ideals ; but if too much of the life energy devotes itself to phantasy, especially at an age when the phantasy is bound to be formless and poor in content, then the unconscious life is indulged at the expense of the conscious, and the possibilities of the personality are never realized.

CHAPTER IX

FAULTS AND HOW TO FIND THEM

I WAS passing an Edinburgh book-shop when the above ungracious title caught my eye. I paused to look, and found the sub-title ran, *Motor-car Failures and their Remedies*. We do not know a fault till we know its cause; and when we know its cause we can set about remedying it. To lose our temper with the car and scold it may be natural, but we all know it is foolish, useless, and likely only to make matters worse.

Children, like motor-cars, sometimes develop faults. But they have one great advantage over motor-cars, namely, that they themselves can usually assist in discovering the cause and suggesting the remedy. Yet we, as educators, often fail to make use of this obvious fact. We blame the whole child for the error; that is, we identify him with the fault, whereas our first care should be to effect a separation, to make him feel that the fault is his enemy; he has to lead the attack; we are only auxiliaries.

For example, take such a bad habit as persistent thumb-sucking: exhortation and punishment may be entirely without effect. So long as you evidently regard it as your business to cure the fault, the child is helpless; he weeps, promises amendment, but all in vain. Give up the hopeless task; let the child understand it is his affair, and very often the cure comes as if by magic.

Some of the childish modes of activity that we please to call faults, I have considered in a previous work.[1] Those

[1] *Five Years Old or Thereabouts*, Chapter IX.

which I discuss here will become intelligible to us if we bear steadily in mind these instinctive tendencies which are the child's heritage.

Laziness. When a child is lazy, some physical disability should be suspected. His sight and his hearing should be tested by an expert. Slight deviations from normal in these senses, which cannot be detected in the ordinary day's work, may yet put such a strain on the child that he becomes inattentive and apparently lazy and unresponsive as a protective measure. Similarly laziness may be simply the natural expression of bodily weakness. Here again we are unjust if we reproach the child.

Sometimes the inertia arises not out of the bodily condition, but out of the mental condition. The following case is recorded by a school medical officer : " I recently saw a child who was brought before me as a mental defective, in whom I found an intelligence quotient within five points of a hundred, yet who was making no progress in school work. This child rarely spoke, would sit for a whole lesson apathetic and indifferent to what was going on around her, and did not mix with other girls of her own age in the playground. She was extremely reserved, and in speaking to her one saw that she was very antagonistic and hostile towards any advance on one's part. Always timid, she was at times lachrymose, at times defiant. Yet the child could read well, and would occasionally take books from the school library. Her voice was hoarse and guttural, and had been so ever since an illness in infancy.

" Careful inquiry into the child's early history revealed the following series of facts. She was the youngest member of a family of ten, and had been much teased by her elder brothers. In a crowded house she had come off second best in many of the minor comforts and amenities of home life, having to give way in many things to her sisters and brothers. Thus there was established a sense of inferiority and an unnatural timidity. During the winter of 1914–5

she was just of an age when she would begin to mix with other children, joining in their games out of doors, but her hoarse and guttural voice gained for her the nickname of 'German' or 'Bosch.' Unable, because of her sense of inferiority and her timidity, to retaliate upon the bodies of her tormentors for this insult, she took it greatly to heart, and this worry became a powerful but suppressed factor in her life. Unfortunately it was not realized at the time how much the child suffered on this account, and her complaints, which were rare, were laughed at. When I saw her she was in a condition exactly analogous to shell-shock. Now that this girl's condition is diagnosed I believe that in time she will get rid of her distressing complaint. Her teacher now knows on what lines to treat her, and she is already showing signs of response." [1]

This case shows, among other things, the value of those standardized tests which enable one, by means of a short examination, to say definitely how far defective intelligence is responsible for a condition such as that described. If the intelligence is normal, as in this case, one at once suspects emotional maladjustment.

Selfishness. The selfish child is often very naïve in his conduct. Here is an illustration. At class one day Lilian suddenly snatched Mona's pencil from her. Mona's protestations called my attention.

"Lilian, you must give Mona back her pencil."

"But that's such a horrid little pencil, I can't write with it."

"Then how can you expect Mona to do so? Give hers back at once."

Lilian complied, grumbling. Then she jumped up and went across to a lady, who happened to be sitting in the room working with a pencil.

"Will you take this horrid little pencil, and give me yours, Miss Gray?" she inquired.

[1] *The Times Educational Supplement*, September 9, 1922.

Miss Gray, taken by surprise: "You must ask Miss Drummond's permission before you come from the class that way, Lilian."

Lilian turned to me: "May I ask Miss Gray?"

"Certainly not. You can't possibly ask Miss Gray to take that pencil which you say is a nasty one and give you hers."

Lilian, coming reluctantly back to her seat: "But it's quite a nice little pencil."

Selfishness, like most faults, should be cured in babyhood, or, rather, it should never be allowed to start. Consideration for others should be inculcated from the beginning.

Sometimes a selfish child will turn over a new page if some younger child is put in his charge; he will now seek the good for his ward rather than for himself.

The selfish child requires to have his imagination stirred, to be encouraged to put himself in the place of other people. He should be guided to do the things that he likes to do in such a way as to give pleasure to others. He will thus experience the joy of social approval.

Some children are saved from selfishness by instinctive sympathy and a power of identifying themselves with others. At an early age Margaret endeared herself to her nurse, when she had required some attention in the night, by saying, "You'll be cold, Nana, standing there." When she was just five, I had to rise to soothe her after a troubled dream. To induce her to settle quickly I said I wanted to go to sleep again. The child, though still sobbing, at once removed her little arm from my neck.

The need to give love—the protective instinct—and the need to receive love, may both lead to unselfishness, if wisely directed.

When Margaret was four and a half I made some remark to her about being a useful girl. "Do you like to be useful?" I added.

"Yes."

"Why?"

"Because I like to be loved. . . . You see, Nana would be always, always cross with me if I didn't do what I was told."

A few days later, when I was "her child," she had occasion to say to me, "You mustn't do everything you want."

"Why not?" I said.

"Because you'd be a rude girl, and you wouldn't like that, for you know no one would love you if you were a rude girl."

That love is to be desired is to the child a fundamental truth, and is probably the surest foundation for the teaching of ethics.

Margaret, as a rule, is fond of her fellow creatures, and rejoices in visitors. On one occasion, however, she had set her heart on a story before she went to bed, and as the visitors prolonged their stay till bedtime drew very near, she gave them several broad hints that their own little children at home would be wishing for them. Later, when I went to see her in her cot, she said, in tones of intense longing, "Oh, I *did* want that story."

So I took the opportunity to tell her she must not ask visitors to go away.

"But I wanted them to go away."

"But they had been asked to come."

"*I* didn't ask them."

Thus I was driven back to the impregnable position that it wasn't kind to say you didn't want people, and that she would not like it if I didn't want her.

Discontent. There are children, just as there are grown-up people, who when alternatives are presented to them, always wish after the event that they had taken the other course. When they have jelly, they wish they had jam, and when they have jam they wish they had jelly.

I think this attitude is usually the product of training; and that it would be nearly, if not quite, as easy to secure the opposite.

A little caprice is probably quite normal when a child is beginning to feel his own freedom. When Margaret was about two and a half she occasionally took "spoilt child" turns—"Mamma feed baby—not want it—Mamma feed baby," but usually she was a sunny soul. When one was dressing her, she might wriggle away—"Not want to be dressed—not want to be dried." A little suggestion in the form of a story was, I think, always effective. "Once upon a time there was a little girl who said she didn't want to be dressed, and she was popped in her cot and left there all day; but Margaret Anne always wants to be dressed," and so on. "Once upon a time" acted as a charm. The implied threat was not really necessary.

Such treatment is, of course, the direct outcome of the familiar psychological fact, that one can attend to only one thing at a time.

If one wishes to divert a child's attention, one's only plan is to give him something else to attend to. A slap might have served the same purpose, but I consider that a very crude method of education.

The jam-jelly children might often be the better of a day in bed, for there is nothing more fatiguing than discontent.

Discontent and contrariness of this kind are probably the outcome of the Self-Display (or Self-Assertive) instinct. The child has acquired a hunger for the notice of others, irrespective of whether that notice is accompanied by praise or blame. Of the two-year-old Margaret her mother wrote, "She is funny about the order of her dinner. To-day she had a plate of meat and potatoes, but said she did not want it—wanted pudding. As she would not go on with it, I brought on the pudding—sago and prunes. She said she wanted the prunes. I gave her the juice, which she ate. She then wanted pudding. She finished an entire

sago pudding. She then went back to the meat and potatoes and finished that." Out of such a beginning a bad attack of negativism might easily have developed, but the mother's wise humouring saved the situation (cf. *Five Years Old or Thereabouts*, pp. 150–51).

Rudeness. When a child is rude we may safely say th fault is not in the child, but in the social environment. Very often rudeness begins in a misunderstanding. We forget that little children are to all intents and purposes foreigners, and cannot be expected to know the niceties of our language or of our conventions. When a small boy calls his mother a monkey, it is only her shocked tone that reveals to him that he has been rude, and that rudeness is an offence. He has yet to learn that what is sauce for the gosling is by no means sauce for the goose ; that there are names which may fitly and without offence be applied by adults to small boys, but which must not be applied by small boys to adults.

I remember when Margaret was a very little person, she once left the room saying, " I have had enough of father and mother, and you and grandpa." I thought this unlike her usual politeness ; and it was only when her mother reminded me that a day or two before, when she went away, I had jokingly said, " Have you had enough of us ? " that I realized I had myself to blame.

We sometimes think that children pick up bad language with particular ease. This is because the use of such language by them creates a sensation, and so impresses the words upon their memory. Similarly rudeness which shows itself in words is often repeated just because the child is thus able to make the " splash " which he enjoys.

One often hears people saying that they do not care for children after the age of four or five, because they become so " cheeky." Here again the fault is usually in the interpreter. The child does not use words as we do ; nor is he conventionalized as we are. An expression or an action

which in an adult would be depreciating, may in the case of a child be complimentary.

I remember hearing a tale of an Edinburgh child, who was staring with all her eyes at one of our Newhaven fish-wives. The woman became restive under the steady gaze, and demanded rather angrily, "What do you see in me to be glowering at?"

"I was thinking how beautiful you are," was the disarming reply.

In teaching politeness one must be careful to show that it is its own reward; it is due to ourselves rather than to others.

In a country school there was a small boy, "a lazy, thoughtless little fellow. One day, when a man drove through the school yard, his brother, who was very considerate, ran to open the gate. The stranger tossed a penny to the child, and the teacher, thinking to give a lasting lesson in consideration to the thoughtless boy, dwelt at length upon the stick of candy the money would buy. Several days later another man drove through the school yard, and the thoughtless boy ran to open the gate. He received a smile and a 'Thank you,' but no money, and he could not be persuaded to open the gate again." [1]

We may think we should not fall into the mistake made by the teacher in emphasizing the material reward; but it is wonderful how often we slip into some such error. Indeed, is not the practically universal habit of tipping just a confession that we lightly esteem what ought to be of more value—the smile and the word of thanks? And yet in our hearts we know that it is the goodwill that is of import—not the coin.

Mischief. The mischievous child is certainly a troublesome person, but at first I am convinced the mischief is never malicious, though it may easily become so if unwisely treated.

[1] *Educating by Story-Telling*, by K. D. Cather.

Once, when staying at Dumfries, we spent a morning at the river with Margaret, then three and a quarter. Her father was wading, and his boots were standing unguarded. The child had a little pail, and was busy discovering the possibilities of water. By and by a clear little voice was heard : " I'm going to pour water in your boots."

Now many a child would not have made a preliminary announcement, and after the deed was discovered would have been slapped, or at least called a naughty mischievous girl. But how is Three-year-old to know that boots filled with water will not dry out as readily as a bucket ? It is difficult enough even for adults to foresee consequences, except in relation to very familiar events. Many a so-called mischievous act is an expression of the ignorance inevitable in people who have had so short a time to make themselves acquainted with the furniture of earth. It is a sign of our own ignorance and want of thought that such lack of acquaintance should so often be confused with intentional mischief.

One day I complained that Patricia, then a speechless and unsteady toddler, had been biting holes in one of my shawls. Her mother seized the shawl, selected the biggest hole, and pointed it out to the culprit, saying reproachfully, " Look, *Baby* did that ; *Baby* spoiled the pretty shawl." Baby's little face immediately expressed the most grave concern.

How was she to know that a shawl was any the worse for having a few holes in it ? How was she even to know that biting would produce holes ? But she was at once responsive to her mother's tone and manner. I am sure that in her own way she felt that she had been guilty of conduct unsuited to a self-respecting baby.

If a piece of thoughtless or, so to speak, accidental mischief creates a great sensation, it is very likely to be repeated, perhaps in even more flagrant form. The act becomes a sort of obsession with the child, and, when opportunity presents itself, he commits it almost against

his own will. A calm and unemotional attitude on the part of the mother, a fixed belief that the child needs education and instruction, not punishment, will tend to prevent difficulties from arising.

Stealing. A very simple form of this fault is frequently found in young children who, on first coming to school, appropriate pieces of chalk, pencils, and other trifles that take their fancy. Such children often come from homes where no one has any special possessions—where everything belongs to everybody, and even clothes are worn indiscriminately. It is a good thing to let these little ones have in school something that really belongs to them—something that no one may take from them. Thus they will develop a sense of ownership, and through this a readiness to respect the ownership of others. Their instinct of acquisition will be restrained within legitimate bounds.

Stealing on a higher plane may be due to the instinct of self-display combined with childish ignorance. I have in mind the case of a little boy who attended a free kindergarten. Half-a-crown stolen from his mother's purse he exchanged for pence, and in this form distributed it among his young companions. For this offence his mother "gave him the belt," still in certain circles an outraged parent's one resource. The offence naturally, as Georgie was a boy of spirit, occurred again. His mother, evidently a woman of some intelligence and imagination, took her young hopeful up to the Court, where she interviewed a policeman. He gave her to understand that the Law would not condescend to take notice of so small a criminal, and that she must deal with the matter herself. Again Master Georgie, no doubt unconsciously very much elated by all this, took what was not his. This time his mother brought him to his teacher, who quietly and sympathetically showed him the affair in its true light and ended the trouble.

We need not wonder that children find it difficult to

understand our financial system. In well-to-do homes children as old as nine or ten may think that there are certain shops which supply merchandize for nothing; because they have often heard orders being given and have never seen any payment. The little people often bestow a good deal of thought on such difficult matters. One day my six-year-old niece suddenly remarked to me that she used not to know people gave money back when some one lent it to them. A little conversation ensued on the difference between lending money where we wished only the equivalent returned, and lending other things which must in actual fact be restored. The remarks which children make apropos of nothing in the immediate environment, are valuable indications of their busy thoughts.

In the case of older children who have been well brought up, and whose conduct to date has been quite satisfactory, stealing may begin quite suddenly, and it is often very difficult to get at the root of the matter. The child is often much distressed when the offence is brought home to him, and can give no explanation of how he came to commit it. In these cases corporal punishment should not be employed, nor should there be any great show of moral disapproval. If the fault recurs after a sensible talk about the matter, probably a psychological analysis by an expert should be made.

Stealing may sometimes be the product of phantasy, which is more or less dissociated from normal waking life;[1] at other times it may spring from general unhappiness and a feeling of neglect; again it may be a wild endeavour to escape from an unbearable thought.[2] In any of these cases it may assume an obsessive character. The unbearable thought frequently belongs to the sphere of sex; and whenever trouble of this kind arises it is well to ascer-

[1] See "The Dreams and Day-Dreams of a Delinquent Girl," by Cyril Burt, *Journal of Experimental Pedagogy*, 1921–22.

[2] See Healy, *Conflict and Misconduct*.

tain whether the patient's knowledge in this region is correct and adequate, and whether his emotional attitude is simple and natural. The necessary probing must be done delicately and sympathetically. Freud's method of dream analysis, and Jung's method of verbal associations, are both useful. Once the child's confidence is gained, relevant reminiscences often come freely without the employment of further technique, and one is able to supplement and correct the half knowledge which is so dangerous to its possessor. Care of course must be taken not to go too quickly, to follow the child's line of thought rather than to direct it, and to give him time to assimilate any facts that are new to him.

As a general rule we do not allow our children half enough independence of action and choice. We prevent them growing up, and as an excuse for ourselves we minimize their intelligence. Of our boys and girls of thirteen and fourteen we say they are still mere children.

Certain facts, which emerge from the recent widespread testing of the intelligence of adults, give cause for much thought. It has been found that men and women possessed of only the amount of intelligence of an average child of eleven are yet earning an honest living and even bringing up a family. The source of very many of the difficulties which arise at the adolescent stage is that we have not sufficiently respected the child's personality, nor have we realized his competence.

From babyhood the child should be allowed to direct his own life as much as is consistent with his own safety and the comfort of those around him. He should be encouraged to become independent, to look after his own body, and to exercise his own mind. If this course is followed, then in matters where our word must be law we shall have an obedient child. This obedience will not be forced, but will be given joyfully, because the child will recognize that our wisdom is greater than his, that mother knows best.

CHAPTER X

CONCLUSION

And now, when I perceive that my plough has drawn to its last furrow, I turn again to the point whence I started. Not only the day by day routine which guides the baby's life, but also the unmarked accidents of that life are all the time forming channels which direct and limit the rush of the vital urge within him. The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world. When mothers, by the help of modern psychological discovery, know the real meaning and significance of this trite adage, they will not use their power ignorantly and to the undoing of themselves and their children, as is too often the case at present, but with knowledge interfused with high intent; and then indeed we shall see the beginnings of a new heaven and a new earth.

These channels which cause an active process to be repeated with ever-increasing ease form the natural basis of habits. In an adult a desired habit is formed by constant repetition, which at first is consciously intended. In the child there is as a fundamental part of his being a tendency to repeat, which is automatic in character and which he seems often incapable of resisting.

In *The Dawn of Mind* I have given examples of the senseless repetitions which must have struck all observers of young children.[1]

The backward child of eight who, on being shown a picture and asked to say what it was, answered, "I see a

[1] pp. 122, 123. Also in this book, see pp. 19–20.

man, I see a man, I see a man," continuing in the same way till, after twenty-six repetitions, he was told that would do, gave one the impression of being in the grip of some power within himself from which he could not shake himself free.

In Margaret's first two or three years it was a constant marvel to me how a person of her evident intelligence could be so intent on repeating and repeating very simple activities in stereotyped form. In certain circumstances this craving for repetition takes on a clearly obsessive character. From Patricia's babyhood I cull one or two examples.

In her second year she used to like to go to a low cupboard and get the coffee for breakfast. In the same shelf was a little open pot containing a few glass beads. One day she had taken this, and had spilled the beads, which had been gathered up and put back. Thereafter the sight of the pot caused her to forget her intention of taking the coffee tin, and made her snatch the pot. I don't think she wanted to do so; I think she could not help herself. Similarly, when we were in the country, she one day, when trotting round the table, snatched a piece of bread from a plate and crushed and crumbled it before we could interfere. After that we had much trouble, for she seized any opportunity to do similar snatching with the most uncanny quickness. Here again I think the child was powerless to help herself. One could not see that the act gave her any pleasure, and on other occasions she showed herself so amiably desirous to meet one's wishes that one could not believe that she "only did it to annoy."

One day my friend Miss A. F. MacKenzie, Directress of the Montessori School in Moray House Training College, told me of a very undisciplined little girl who had joined the class. She would rush to the piano and thump the notes. The Directress gently explained to her that this was not the way for a child to behave, but repetition still

occurred. One day Miss MacKenzie, when giving a lesson to another child, heard the objectionable sound. Raising her head she gazed thoughtfully at the culprit, and thinking aloud remarked, " I don't believe she can help it." Somewhat to her amused astonishment the little one to whom she was giving the lesson responded with equal gravity, " I don't think she can."

They were right. The child was in the grip of an obsessive need to repeat. She could not help it, until she attained a higher plane of being where she would have more control.

Some years ago I saw in an institution for feeble-minded children a little girl who had to be fastened into her chair and have her arms tied down because of the injuries she inflicted on herself.[1] Thinking she might be all right if out of doors I asked and received permission to take her for a walk. I was glad to bring her back as quickly as I could ; she paid no attention to anything around her, but with monotonous regularity kept hitting her chin with her hand, where she had already produced evident sores. Next morning at breakfast I asked my brother, the medical superintendent, " What is that knock, knock, knocking that I hear ? " " That," he replied, " is Jane thumping with her chair." Later I saw her in the ward seated in her little chair, and by a swaying movement of her body rocking the chair, so that its legs produced the noise I had heard.

Stealing sometimes assumes the character of an obsessive compulsion. There are cases on record of a thief limiting his stealing to one particular object, and that an object which is of no use or value to him.[2] One of my teacher students once told me of a little boy who was the nuisance of the neighbourhood because of his passion for stealing keys. Poor little fellow ; one is tempted to wonder whether in a blind unintelligent way he is seeking for the

[1] Cf. p. 19.

[2] See my *Elements of Psychology*, p. 119.

key of that life which he feels he cannot understand. Probably a full record of his babyhood would make plain to us how the obsession started.

If we accept this tendency to repeat as a fundamental law of human life, a law which regulates our physical being, and what I may call the lower levels of our mental being, we shall see that the more intelligent a child is the less will he submit himself to the domination of this part of himself. I have recorded how Margaret, when not yet two years old, having automatically snatched a book from a shelf under the influence of the repetition impulse, said firmly, "No" to herself, and attempted to put it back. Similarly Patricia, at about the same age, showed her intelligent comprehension of the state of affairs thus. She had been rebuked for pushing her little wooden spade on several occasions into the wheels of her go-cart. "Mother will take the spade from Baby, if she does that again." Patricia at once handed her mother the spade, as much as to say, "I know I can't help doing it again, so it will be much pleasanter for all parties if I just give you the spade now."

Some of these automatisms, e.g. nail-biting, may continue to worry their victim long after childhood has passed away; but as a rule they disappear as the intelligence develops. In children of defective mentality, as appears above, they may be very troublesome indeed.

My attention having been for some years attracted and my wonder roused by this very remarkable tendency to repetition in children, it was with considerable interest that the other day, in reading a book of Freud's, just published in this country,[1] I discovered that arguing from phenomena observed in the conduct of neurotic patients, and also in the play of children, he asserts that "we may venture to make the assumption that there really exists in psychic life a repetition-compulsion, which goes beyond the pleasure-

[1] *Beyond the Pleasure Principle.*

principle." "This," he says, "seems to us more primitive, more elementary, more instinctive, than the pleasure-principle, which is displaced by it."

In June, 1896, Dr. John Thomson published in *The Child Study Monthly* an important paper *On Some Curious Habits in Children.* The habits he mentions are dirt eating, wetting the palms of the hands, nail biting, and sucking the fingers or thumb, the lips, tongue, or other parts of the body, or some other object. These habits are not purely automatic or unconscious; they "are resorted to of set purpose because of the great gratification which they afford to the child's feelings."

With regard to the results of these habits, Dr. Thomson says: "I think that there can be no doubt that in ordinarily healthy children, unless carried far or accompanied by manifestations of excitement, they often do no harm, although certainly they are always objectionable. In those children, however, in whom they cause emotional disturbance, they must surely be very bad for the nervous system, and should be put a stop to as soon as possible."

It seems to me a plausible theory that Dr. Thomson may here be combining two classes of habit which are really distinct from one another. The first class would consist of habits which are pure examples of the repetition-compulsion. The practice of these habits is not accompanied by excitement or even by much gratification, but if they are forcibly prevented great uneasiness may develop. Dissatisfaction is felt increasingly as the need to repeat is resisted. There is a craving, an uneasiness, which the repetition satisfies, yet the act itself need not give pleasure. Sometimes, indeed, I think it may itself be unpleasing.

The second class of habits consists of those which give rise to pleasurable excitement or "emotional disturbance." They are libidinal gratifications, expressions of what Freud calls infantile sexuality. The term suggested by Dr.

Thomson—infantile dissipation—might well be applied to them.[1]

Whatever the basis of the habit, however, there can be no doubt that the way to release the child is to lead his life on to a higher plane. Infantile fixations are to be avoided as far as possible, for they may have unfortunate consequences later. Treatment must, in Dr. Thomson's words, "include a general attention to the child's health and happiness, and intelligent endeavours to give him a more interesting life, and to encourage all wholesome sources of gratification."

Theoretically the principle of the repetition-compulsion is of extreme interest and casts a new light on the behaviour of that most mysterious thing—a baby. It is at the basis of the well-known conservatism of the child. It is in the most marked contrast with the attitude of the adult, who soon becomes "fed-up" with sameness, and is constantly demanding something new. When the activity which is repeated is not harmful, as is usually the case in the child's spontaneous repetitive play, for example, repetition should probably be allowed. Such natural repetitions tend, I think, to lay a stable foundation for later life. It is better for the child that his craving for repetition should be gratified. Such gratification will tend towards producing a concentration of attention which is of the most vital importance to intellectual life. If the repetition-compulsion is not felt in childhood, or if it is debarred from satisfaction by unwise interference, we may find that a volatile attention develops in the child which will make him extremely difficult or impossible to train properly.

Repetitions are a very marked feature of a Montessori classroom, where children are free to perform certain exercises, with apparatus of an educative nature. The number of times that a little child will perform these

[1] Cf. p. 20.

attractive exercises has been universally hailed as evidence of the unspoiled child's joy in work and power of concentration.

I have already indicated that I agree that such repetitions are of great value. But there may come a time when the exercise ceases to be of foundational importance, and when the child, in the grip of the repetition-compulsion is simply wasting his time. This resting in an achievement will be most likely to take place in the case of children who have little intellectual energy and ambition. No doubt the wise Directress will come to know when it is necessary to intervene and urge the child to progress. The point is one which might with much advantage be discussed by those who have experience of free classrooms—now happily rapidly increasing in number.

The question of how a repetition-compulsion is established is an important and difficult one. Observation of young children indicates that opposition, scolding, punishment, any behaviour on the part of adults which magnifies the occurrence in the child's eyes, favour the establishment of such a compulsion. The importance of these happenings is that they may have a determining influence on the course of later development.

There are forms of illness and disability common at the present day which have been well named flights from reality. These flights appear as regressions to an earlier period of the individual life, which has come to be regarded as a time when happiness was attained. At the present day one sometimes thinks that there are very few persons who do not suffer to some extent from this over-estimation of the past, and this depreciation and rejection of the present. I have already referred to and illustrated this tendency, but the matter is of sufficient importance for me to return to it here.

A review of Mr. Burges Johnson's *Youngsters*, described as " Collected Poems of Childhood," states that " perhaps

the 'moral' of the whole delightful book is to be found in the opening verse :

"What's the use o' growin' up ?
You can't paddle with your toes
In a puddle—you can't *yell*
When yer feelin' extra well—
Why every feller knows
A grown-up can't let *loose.*
I don't *want* to be older—
What's the use ?"

In this book the reviewer considers the author has "caught and reproduced the spirit and taste of youth and its attitude towards life."

If this is indeed the case we may well despair of our civilization. But I hope and believe that the reviewer is mistaken, that the sentiments he commends are the sentiments of age, not of youth ; moreover, that they are the sentiments of age that has not attained, a stumbling and faltering age, not the courageous age of the poet, who invites us to grow old along with him, because the best is yet to be, the last of life for which the first was made. This latter attitude, I maintain, is natural to the child ; and we are wrong ourselves, and we do him a wrong when we adopt the other. The undeniable fact that it is so common among adults to over-estimate and to crave for the joys of youth shows how mistaken have been the education and the choice of employment which have led to this state of things.

It is not to be denied, indeed it has been shown over and over again in this book, that even the child feels the siren call of the past ; but there is no reason why education should assist the regressive tendency. Our great need is for an education that will bring about harmony between the individual and the environment, so that every man may find happiness in his work, as well as in his play. There are pessimists who say that there are kinds of work

which must be done, but yet which are of such a nature that no human being could find satisfaction in doing them. There are, however, at the present day, a considerable number of people who are happy in work of the most diverse kinds, work which, to other people, often appears most unattractive. Hence I think we need not despair of ultimately arriving at a time when the work of the world will be done by putting square pegs into square holes and round pegs into round holes. The intelligence testing and vocational testing of modern psychology may be regarded as means towards this desirable end.

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